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BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

1914-1919





Frontispiece.

ALDERMAN H. W. TWIGGS, J.P.  
(*Lord Mayor 1918-19*).





BRISTOL  
AND THE  
GREAT WAR  
1914—1919

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BRISTOL  
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## FOREWORD

· AMONG the most interesting annals of a City are the Records of special efforts made during great crises in its history. The Great War which began in August, 1914, and did not end until November, 1918, gave rise to many activities. Bristol men and women, quickly realising the nature and magnitude of the struggle in which our Empire was engaged, responded to the call of duty with an enthusiasm worthy of the best traditions of the City.

Our motto, "Virtute et Industria," animated every soul. The dispatch of equipment and munitions to the Expeditionary Force, the raising and training of tens of thousands of Bristol men, the fitting out of ships, the construction of aeroplanes, the making of shells, the production of war material, absorbed the thoughts and roused the untiring energy of its inhabitants.

News from the seat of war of repulse or retreat served to stiffen the nerve and muscle of each one to greater effort, whilst the return of wounded heroes awoke the finer instincts of the race. Red Cross, Ambulance, and Hospital work sprang into existence. Doctors, Nurses, Sisters, and a host of voluntary

workers vied with each other in rendering aid to those who had faced death and suffered. The men in the fighting lines, and those who were going forward were not forgotten ; comforts of every kind were prepared by the loving thought and hands of many women in the City. In all these activities Bristol played a noble part, and it is to keep alive the memory of what Bristol did in the Great War that this volume has been prepared, to be a memorial for all time, in the hope that it may act as an inspiration for future generations of Bristolians to be ever ready to serve.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "J. T. M. Swigg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

*Lord Mayor.*

THE COUNCIL HOUSE,  
BRISTOL,  
31st October, 1919.



## INTRODUCTORY

ON August 1st, 1914, Germany launched upon the world the greatest war that has occurred in the history of the human race. On November 11th, 1918, an armistice was signed and hostilities ceased in the main arena. Between these dates there was exhibited an amount of effort, suffering and sacrifice without parallel in the world's history. Never has there been a war in which the whole resources of nations, material and personal, have been so fully called forth; never one in which so many nations were engaged, in which the fighting forces attained such huge dimensions, nor when the destructive ingenuity of scientific and mechanical skill played so great a part in the strife. Never has there been a war in which the issues were so far-reaching and important. Upon the result depended the future of human progress, and happily, although at tremendous cost, right triumphed.

In this unprecedented struggle Bristol took no mean part. It has been computed that it enlisted something like sixty thousand men for H.M. Forces, of whom not fewer than four thousand made the great sacrifice. Many of its women enrolled themselves in the units formed for various branches of national service; others rendered valuable aid in the preparation of hospital supplies and comforts for the combatants. The city's contributions in service and in kind were as varied as its normal industries. They ranged from ships to aeroplanes; from food for the fighting forces to shells for the guns. In the training of officers valuable work was done at this centre; in providing accommodation for transports and for the shipment of machines, materials and men the river's mouth docks became a national asset of incalculable importance. In caring for the wounded and bringing to their aid the resources of specialised surgery and orthopædic skill the city has a notable record. Its recruiting arrangements early in the war became a model for other parts of the country; its Inquiry Bureau accomplished a work so full of interest and so strong in its appeals to emotion that the story has the qualities of a romance. It is the purpose



## INTRODUCTORY

of this volume to put on record some account of these manifold activities.

The sudden change from peace to war could not fail to produce a profound effect upon the public life and outlook. Such a calamity was undreamed of by the majority of the people. Persistent efforts had been made to sweep away any cause of estrangement between Great Britain and Germany, and there appeared good reason to anticipate that the relations of the two nations would be marked by increasing cordiality. Teutonic visitors to Bristol were welcomed and entertained, parties of Englishmen, in which Bristol was represented, were received with a corresponding display of good feeling in the Fatherland. The dominant aspiration was that there should be a reduction of armaments rather than an extension, and although German trade rivalry produced much discussion, the idea of war did not enter the popular imagination.

Thus up to August, 1914, in the thoughts of Bristol citizens the advancement of the city in the peaceful arts of commerce and industry and the development of social reforms occupied a prominent place. The courageous municipal policy which resulted in the construction of the Royal Edward Dock was beginning to bear fruit. The excellent facilities the port was enabled to offer placed it in a position in the maritime world vastly superior to that previously occupied. Year after year the total of shipping tonnage became larger ; the effort to increase the use of our docks by manufacturers and importers in the Midlands was producing a good influence, and the favourable reception accorded to the Bristol Commercial Mission (Mr. Henry L. Riseley, a public-spirited citizen, and Mr. E. Manning Lewis, then Commercial Superintendent of the Docks) suggested fresh avenues for business, and raised hopes of new steamship services to distant parts of the world.

The importance of science in relation to industrial processes was being increasingly recognised, and the University of Bristol helped to keep this aspect in the public mind, while in its laboratories special problems of industry were investigated. Many manufacturing concerns in the city had moved to suburban sites, where works could be established upon modern lines ; the demand for dock-side sites aroused expectations of additions to the list of local industries. The closing of certain Bristol



## INTRODUCTORY

collieries and the large number of citizens who were allured to overseas dominions by the glowing prospects of life in a new world checked the growth of population, and the Census of 1911 gave a smaller total than had been estimated. But subsequent progress in industry and commerce was such that this particular phase was regarded as past. Housing became a matter of some urgency, but the adoption of a municipal scheme was hindered by the attempt to find one that would pass the test of an economic rent. Hence any practical action was delayed until the increase in after-war costs made the problem still more formidable.

The outbreak of hostilities was soon followed by a Treasury order forbidding capital expenditure upon all projects on which postponement was possible. A number of Bristol schemes were thus held up. One of the most notable was the erection in Queen's Road of an imposing front to the University, this being mainly undertaken by Mr. George A. Wills and Mr. H. H. Wills as a memorial of their father, Mr. H. O. Wills, whose munificent gift of £100,000 had constituted him Founder of the University.

Another princely project that had to be delayed was the provision near Durdham Down of a home for incurables. For this proposal Bristol had to thank Mr. H. H. Wills. A new municipal lodging house for women, the extension of that already at work for men, the erection of new schools, the carrying out of large expenditure to develop the docks, an increase in the civic hospital accommodation and the provision at Ham Green of a new sanatorium for consumptives, the completion of extensive and costly public baths at Horfield, and procedure with the scheme for bringing into existence a Central Institution for the Y.M.C.A., were among the many matters in which advance was hindered or stopped by the war.

Another important question similarly affected concerned the exercise by the Corporation of their powers of purchase under the Tramways Act. The changes in regard to prices of materials and the cost of labour during and since the war have completely upset the financial estimates on which the proposed purchase was based, and have left a crop of difficulties to be dealt with in the future.

At a period of exceptional stress such as that through which the country passed, responsibilities of no light order fell year



## INTRODUCTORY

by year upon the Chief Magistrate of Bristol. The city has been fortunate in having a succession of Lord Mayors with the capacity and the determination to give the necessary lead to the citizens in the various matters where action was necessary. In August, 1914, Alderman John Swaish had entered the last quarter of his term of office as Lord Mayor. The war at once turned his municipal activities into new directions, and so successful was his leadership that the Council without hesitation asked him to serve for another year. From November, 1915, to November, 1917, Dr. Barclay J. Baron occupied the onerous position. He too threw himself into war work with vigour, and the fact that in earlier life he had resided in Germany enabled him to speak with special knowledge upon some of the phases presenting themselves. His public work during the anxious period of his mayoralty was rewarded by the King in June, 1918, with a knighthood. Sir Barclay subsequently devoted himself to the task of securing employment for demobilised men, and was serving as Chairman of the Advisory Committee to the Employment Bureau when, to the general regret, his active and useful career was terminated by a fatal accident. In November, 1917, the City Council, for the first time in their history, selected as chief magistrate a member of the Labour Party. The departure proved an immense success. Alderman Frank Sheppard had not only had a life-long experience in connection with Labour movements, but had for many years engaged in municipal work, and by his fairness and common sense had won the confidence of the members of the Corporation. His year of office was marked by many eloquent appeals to all classes to get rid of the old suspicions and animosities and to take their part in the great work of reconstruction, on the success of which our future depended. Alderman Sheppard, as Lord Mayor, saw practically the end of the war ; the armistice was signed two days after the conclusion of his term of office. Responsibilities were, however, far from being at an end when hostilities were thus brought to a close. The immediate problems of peace were almost or quite as important as those of conducting the war, and Alderman H. W. Twiggs, who succeeded to the position of head of the city, found the task confronting him was not a light one. The fruits of his earlier work as Chairman of the Docks Committee were



## INTRODUCTORY

seen in the notable part played by the port for the dispatch of troops and war material. The advantages Avonmouth offered to the War Department were at once recognised by Lord Kitchener, who, soon after the commencement of the conflict, visited Avonmouth in order to judge its capabilities.

Among the matters claiming the attention of the fourth Lord Mayor, as the result of a restoration of peace, was the preparation of a suitable record of Bristol's part in the great struggle. In consultation with a Committee of representative citizens, he arranged for the compilation and the publication of this volume. The editorial task has not been an easy one. It has taken a long time to get the information together, and but for the valuable assistance received from naval and military men, from civic and other officials, and from a large number of ladies and gentlemen prominently identified with the many branches of voluntary war work, this full record could not have been compiled. In several cases the information supplied came in the form of a complete and well-written article. The Committee and the Editors desire to offer their thanks to every helper.





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Chapter I  
The Military Effort





# Bristol and the Great War

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## CHAPTER I

### THE MILITARY EFFORT

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE—ROYAL NAVAL VOLUNTEER RESERVE—  
YEOMANRY—ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY—HEAVY BATTERIES—ROYAL  
ENGINEERS—THE GLOUCESTERS—ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS—  
ROYAL AIR FORCE—NATIONAL RESERVE—VOLUNTEERS—UNIVERSITY  
OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS—NO. 3 OFFICER CADET BATTALION—  
ARMY CHAPLAINS—UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL—CLIFTON COLLEGE—  
BRISTOL GRAMMAR SCHOOL—MERCHANT VENTURERS' TECHNICAL  
COLLEGE—VICTORIA CROSS WINNERS—COAST WATCHING—THE  
REMOUNT DEPOT, SHIREHAMPTON—THE WOMEN'S SERVICES—  
WAR PENSIONS.

THE general war effort put forth by Bristol was, in proportion to the size of the city, of huge dimensions. In many ways, the chief of which are described in this volume, Bristol played a vital part in bringing about the victorious conclusion of the war. The most direct contribution to victory made by Bristol, however, was her actual military effort; for Bristol men in large numbers participated not only in the titanic struggle on the Western Front, but in all the far-flung campaigns which eventually brought about the downfall of the Central Powers and their hangers-on, including the Turks.

It was fitting also that large numbers of men from this ancient and famous Port did splendid service in the Navy, not only at the Battle of Jutland and lesser sea fights, but in carrying out the thousand and one humdrum but not less arduous tasks which the Senior Service was called upon to



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tackle. Bristol has always provided recruits for the Royal Marines, and during the war made handsome contributions to that amphibious service.

At the time of the outbreak of war Bristol was well represented both in the Navy and the Army. The Gloucestershire Regiment, with its depot at Horfield Barracks, has always been closely associated with our city, and the 1st Gloucesters, immediately on the declaration of war by England against Germany, went to the Continent as a part of the original Expeditionary Force—the famous old “Contemptibles”—whose glory they shared to the full, though at terrible cost in casualties. The 2nd Gloucesters sailed from China to the stricken fields of France and Belgium, and after achieving heroic deeds and suffering innumerable hardships were transferred to Macedonia, where they saw through the irksome Salonika campaign to its triumphant finish.

The Territorial Forces associated with Bristol also gave a magnificent account of themselves. The original units in existence when war came covered themselves with glory, and set an example which was nobly followed by the new units which during the progress of the war were added to the various formations. The Bristol Division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve took part in the ill-fated expedition to Antwerp, and afterwards made large contributions to the personnel of the Navy.

Bristol sent many thousands of men to the New Army. The 12th Gloucesters, raised by the Bristol Citizens' Recruiting Committee, achieved a fine fighting record, and excellent work in the field was done by the 14th Gloucesters (West of England Bantams) similarly raised. A valuable contribution to the artillery of the Allies was made in the two Heavy Batteries raised by the Recruiting Committee.

The imperishable deeds of the units particularly associated with Bristol, and the shining valour of their officers and men, are described in this volume. It must be recorded, however, that Bristolians also served with the 9th, 10th, 13th and 18th Gloucesters (New Army), and the 1/5th and 2/5th Gloucesters (Territorial Force).

When the war had developed into a colossal world conflict, and there was a constant call for fresh drafts to replace losses,



## THE MILITARY EFFORT

it was impossible that Bristol men should always be sent to units with local associations. The result was that great numbers of Bristol infantrymen, who would naturally have preferred to serve with the Gloucesters, found themselves allotted to other regiments, notably the Worcesters and the Warwicks. Bristol also provided innumerable drafts for the Royal Artillery, Cavalry of the Line, the Royal Engineers, and the Royal Army Service Corps. Indeed, there was no arm of the service in which our old city was not excellently represented.

Not only did the Royal Air Force obtain thousands of their best machines from the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company's famous factory at Filton, but a very considerable part of the personnel of the Force hailed from Bristol and the surrounding district. The indispensable Machine Gun Corps drew many of their best officers and men from Bristol, and numerous local soldiers volunteered for the hazardous and weird task of manning His Majesty's land ships, serving with distinction in the Tank Corps, who were destined to contribute so vital a part to the victory of the Allies.

## ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE.

The large majority of the members of the Royal Naval Reserve were definitely mobilised on Sunday and Monday, August 2nd and 3rd, 1914. In Bristol stirring scenes were witnessed at the Shipping Office in Prince Street, where the men crowded to report themselves for service. There was hardly a ship in the fleet that had not some R.N.R. men, and many of them belonged to Bristol and the West Country. They stuck to their work splendidly, and displayed great bravery under all kinds of trying conditions. In the North Sea, in Gallipoli and elsewhere they gave a splendid account of themselves. On the Royal Naval Reserve Register for the Port of Bristol there were 153 names in 1914, and later 112 were enrolled for the trawler section, which did such fine work in mine-sweeping, etc. The number of Bristol R.N.R. men who received honours is not definitely known, but at least two received the D.S.M. and one the Croix de Guerre.



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### ROYAL NAVAL VOLUNTEER RESERVE.

Bristol with its traditions of maritime service took its part worthily in providing men for various branches of the Royal Navy. Before the war broke out the Bristol Division of the R.N.V.R., commanded by the Hon. Cyril A. Ward, M.V.O., R.N., mustered between 400 and 500 of all ranks, and they mobilised on August 2nd, 1914. The men responded with fine keenness and enthusiasm, and went away to the camp at Walmer in high spirits. Here they remained in training until October, when they formed part of the ill-fated Naval Division sent in haste to Belgium to endeavour to save Antwerp from falling into the hands of the enemy. As is well known their efforts were unavailing, and after doing their part valiantly the Naval Reservists had as much as they could do to escape capture. Many of the Bristol contingent reached Holland, and spent the remainder of the war period in an internment camp at Groningen. Others less fortunate fell into the hands of the enemy, whilst a certain number won clear, and afterwards served with the Naval Division at Gallipoli and also on the Western Front. It is believed that of the original 400 men of the Bristol contingent of the R.N.V.R. about one half survive.

There is no aspect of the great recruiting campaign more stimulating than the magnificent response to the call of the Navy. Men were needed for all branches of the Senior Service, and the Bristol Recruiting District, which extended from Cheltenham to Cornwall and the Scilly Islands, and east as far as Bournemouth, nobly responded to the demand for young men of spirit and good physique. Commander Ernest G. Mardon was appointed recruiting officer for the district, and from first to last 2,829 men were enrolled and sent up from the Headquarters in Jamaica Street to the Crystal Palace, which had been turned into a great naval training station. The recruits were collected from all parts of the district, and sent off each week in batches. Citizens will recall many an inspiring episode during the critical days of 1915, when these sturdy young patriots from countryside and factories marched through Bristol streets en route for service with our great and glorious Navy.



## THE MILITARY EFFORT

Early in 1915 Bristol's Lord Mayor (Alderman J. Swaish) and a representative group of citizens had the privilege of a visit to the Crystal Palace, and a very interesting day was spent inspecting the remarkable organisation for training. Recruits for the Navy were drawn from all classes of the community ; scholars and plough-boys slung hammocks together ; barristers and coal-miners became shipmates and Bristol's recruits included a sub-editor from one of the local evening papers, who served on a trawler in the North Sea. Some of the boys from Bristol were selected for hydrophone work, some took up wireless telegraphy, others became seamen and volunteered and were accepted for service aboard submarines.

Bristol has good reason to be proud of the part she played during the war in keeping up the strength and the traditions of the Royal Navy.

### ROYAL GLOUCESTERSHIRE HUSSARS.

The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars arrived in Egypt in 1915, and after three months' garrison duty proceeded to Gallipoli. They landed at Suvla Bay, and suffered heavy casualties on August 21st, when the last serious attempt was made to break through the Turkish lines. When the regiment left the Peninsula it was only 50 strong ! In November, 1915, they returned to Egypt and took over their horses, having quickly been made up to full strength again. After three months' vigorous cavalry training they crossed the Suez Canal (February, 1916) with a view to opening up the district for a further advance eastward. A disaster occurred in April, 1916, at Quatra, when one squadron of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars and two and a half squadrons of the Worcesters were all killed or captured. All fought to the very last, and the honour of the regiment was never better maintained.

In August, 1916, the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars took part in the successful defence of Romani, when half the Turkish force was captured. It was here that the Bristol squadron, out by itself, held a gap in the line against 600 Turks for some two hours, preventing a highly critical situation, and also being able to link up two forces of our cavalry, thus saving many hours of precious time to get in touch. Subsequently the regiment



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

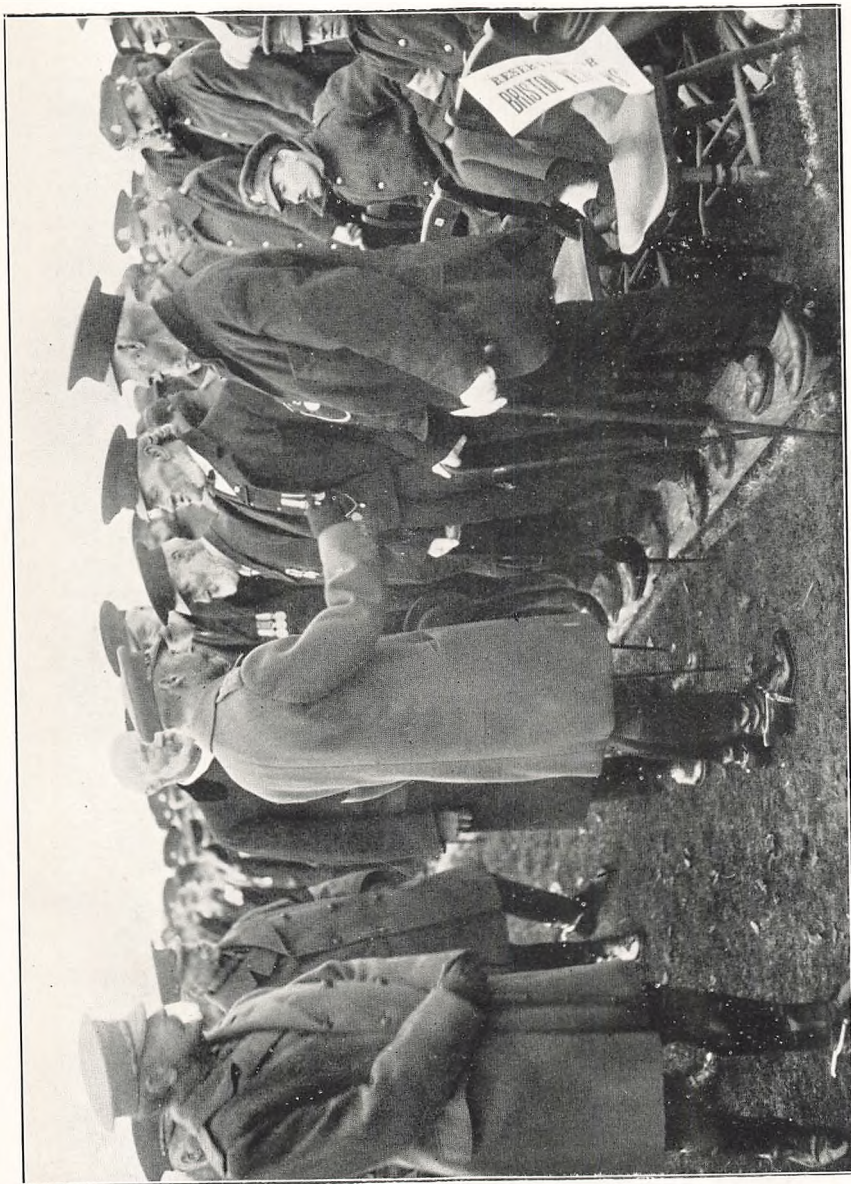
continued the advance across the Sinai Desert with the desert column to El Arisk, which was reached in December, 1916, and the regiment took part in every cavalry action which subsequently occurred, including the raid on Rafa, a night march of thirty-five miles, a ten hours' fight, and a return again after completely defeating the Turkish force, of which over 2,000 were captured. In March and April the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars were in action in the unsuccessful attempts to capture Ghaza, and in October, 1917, they took part in the third and successful attempt. The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars further assisted in capturing Beersheba after a thirty-mile ride in the night. Subsequently they had heavy fighting north of Beersheba, and then continued the advance on Jerusalem.

In April, 1918, the regiment were near Jaffa, when they suddenly moved about 120 miles to Jerusalem-Jericho, and then across the Jordan into the Moabite Hills to carry out a raid on Es Salt (the ancient Ramoth Gilead). The raid was made by two divisions of cavalry and was unsuccessful, and the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars found themselves in a most precarious position. For two days they were surrounded on three sides by the Turks, with no way out, but eventually a successful retirement was made by the whole two divisions across mountainous country, which no one would have ever dreamed of crossing on horseback before the war.

After this the regiment had the most unpleasant three months' stay in the Jordan Valley.

The next move was to the plains of Palestine (August, 1918), to undergo six weeks' training for General Allenby's great advance. On September 20th the attack opened. Three cavalry divisions were in hiding behind the infantry lines, and as soon as a gap was made in the Turkish lines the cavalry dashed through. The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars were the second regiment out of the twenty-seven regiments to gallop through the gap, and it was not long after that that a complete battery with over 100 Turks was captured by a N.C.O. and two men of the B Squadron of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. Their objective was Nazareth (the General Headquarters of the Turkish Army), a distance of seventy miles, which were ridden in twenty-four hours.





P. 8.

HIS MAJESTY THE KING AT INVESTITURE ON DURDHAM DOWN,  
NOVEMBER 8TH, 1917.





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Crossing the Plain of Sharon by day and the Carmel Range and Plain of Esdraelon by night, the regiment arrived at dawn. The Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, acting as advanced guard, were first into Nazareth. Fortunately the Turkish sentries over the machine-guns guarding the only road were asleep, and the place was taken by surprise, although not until after heavy and difficult fighting in the narrow streets.

The West Country Yeomanry mentioned by the War Correspondents at the time were the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. Subsequently the regiment assisted in the capture of Acre, and then went into Damascus. The three cavalry divisions arrived there more or less at the same time, but the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars were the first into the town, two troops having been specially detached to go ahead and capture the wireless station. This was destroyed, and the two troops were surrounded by 1,000 Germans and Turks, and it was only by two successful charges that this small isolated body was able to extricate itself, after having sabred many of the enemy.

After the capture of Damascus it was found that of the three cavalry divisions only one was physically capable of going to Aleppo, a further 250 miles. This was the 5th, to which the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars belonged, and after fifteen days' marching they arrived at and captured Aleppo. The regiment started on this objective with about 350 men and arrived at Aleppo with 120, and this was a higher proportion than most of the regiments of the division. After three months in or near Aleppo they were sent up with some Indian cavalry regiments into Turkey in Asia, to see that peace was kept in that troublesome country. Of the original twenty-two officers who sailed with the regiment seven were killed and seven wounded. Of the officers who joined later three were killed and three wounded.

### NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY.

The North Somerset Yeomanry, containing many Bristol men, were one of the first units outside the Regular Army to land in France, and as early as November, 1914, they were badly cut up in the First Battle of Ypres while doing splendid



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service in helping to stem the battering onslaught of the German hordes.

It was on November 1st, when things were looking very black for the British Army, that the North Somerset Yeomanry sailed from Southampton to Havre, completely equipped and with their full number of horses. They were attached to the 3rd Cavalry Division, and on November 13th went into action dismounted and as infantry. The conditions were appalling, there being very little trench cover, and the troops being subjected to bombardment heavier than had ever been known up to that time, while the enemy flung his best regiments at the British lines recklessly. The North Somerset Yeomanry fought like hardened campaigners. They were in action only a few days, but their casualties were extremely heavy, amounting to one-third of the total strength of the regiment. In Sir John French's despatches they were especially mentioned for the gallant part they played in the desperate battle.

The North Somersets returned to Ypres early in 1915, and after the Germans' deadly gas attack at the Second Battle of Ypres they were called upon to take their place in the line on the eastern side of the town. Thus in May they held a position at Hooze, on the Menin Road, and again suffered heavy casualties, particularly on May 13th, when the enemy made a big effort to break through at that point. On that day practically every one of the regiment's officers in the line became a casualty.

During the rest of the month and in June the North Somersets were used as infantry, but in the summer they returned to Merville, where they had left their horses, and commenced cavalry training. They also took part in digging a line of trenches round Steenbecque. At the Battle of Loos in September they got a taste of cavalry work, entering the village of Loos mounted. Then came the German counter-attacks, during which the regiment fought as infantry with much bravery. They remained for the rest of the year in the neighbourhood of Vermelles, acting as pioneers and clearing up the battlefields.

Early in 1916 they moved down to the Hesdin district, which was then the area of the Cavalry Corps, and there they remained for some months, with the exception of a fortnight's



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intensive training on the coast at Paris Plage. With the approach of July the regiment was ordered up to the battle area. They did not get into action as cavalry, but on many occasions were called upon to provide working parties and salvage parties for the front lines. Their headquarters were at Corbie. After tasks at Merlimont-le-Plage, Moilly-Maillet and Beaumont Hamel, the North Somersets were moved at the beginning of 1917 to the Doullens area, where with many other cavalry regiments they were engaged in building the military railways round about the town of Doullens. Subsequently they took part in the Battle of Arras and then rode to Buire, just outside Albert. They remained at Buire for nearly three months, supplying dismounted parties for the line at Epéhy. During these months the regiment had men in the front line, and those who remained behind had by no means an easy time, for each man had to look after six horses.

The North Somersets were in reserve for the Battle of Cambrai, and were afterwards in the trenches on the St. Quentin front. In February, 1918, the regiment was sent from the forward area to Tertry, where they picked up their horses, but just as the great German offensive started the North Somersets were ordered to Abbeville, where they were split up as reinforcements for other cavalry regiments. Many members of the regiment put in fine cavalry work in the concluding stages of the war.

### 1ST SOUTH MIDLAND BRIGADE, ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY.

The 1st South Midland Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, commonly known as the Gloucestershire Artillery, was mobilised on August 4th, 1914, and proceeded at once to equip to full war strength. Some 300 horses and a number of wagons were purchased, about 2,500 shells were taken from store at Portishead, and a large quantity of harness, clothing, stores, etc., was drawn from the Ordnance Department. On August 7th the brigade marched off from its headquarters in Whiteladies Road, Bristol, to its war station, Plymouth, fully equipped in three days, thus obtaining the distinction of being the first Territorial Brigade of Artillery to leave its headquarters. The following month it was found necessary to move the gunners to Crownhill, near Dartmoor, where extensive training



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was carried out. In October the whole of the division (which was later renamed the 48th Division) was concentrated at Broomfield, Essex, where a few months were spent in divisional training and coast defence.

### *1st Line (48th Division).*

On March 27th, 1915, at 2 a.m., the Artillery Brigade, armed with 15-pounder guns, entrained at the village of Witham to proceed overseas, arriving at Havre in the early hours of the following morning. A rest was anticipated here, but orders were received to entrain immediately for the firing-line, and the brigade arrived at Hazebrouck some twenty-four hours later.

On Easter Monday, April 5th, the first rounds were fired on the Messines Ridge, the battery positions being between Neuve Eglise and Ploegsteert Wood. After three months in Belgium the division was called upon to relieve the 47th Division at Loos, but on arrival in this area staff plans were changed and the 48th retraced its steps to Ferfay, where a short rest was enjoyed. At the end of July the 15-pounders were replaced by the 18-pounder quick-firing guns of the latest type, and the artillery then relieved the French on the Hebuterne Plain in front of the famous Gommecourt Wood. Throughout the Battle of the Somme in 1916 the gunners took a very active part at Gommecourt, Beaumont Hamel, Ovillers, La Boisselle, Thiepval, Mouquet Farm, Pozières, High Wood, Martinpuich, Le Sars, and La Butte de Warlancourt. About this time reorganisation took place in the artillery, the old brigade being renamed the 240th (South Midland) Brigade.

In January, 1917, the division again relieved the French at Péronne, following up the Huns in their retreat in March to the Hindenburg Line, where considerable fighting took place around Guillemont Farm. A short period was spent in Velu Wood and Hermies near Bapaume, and the gunners then set off on trek for Ypres, arriving about July 14th. During the remainder of this month the brigade took part in the most intense bombardment of the whole war, the battery positions being situated on the canal bank. At this stage of the campaign the Huns discovered the value of the British artillery, and very heavy counter-battery work was carried out, causing



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enormous casualties to the British gunners. Three months were spent in this sector, the various positions being Hill Top, St. Julien, Kitchener Wood, and Zonnebeke. During this period the old brigade suffered very heavily, losing many men and horses, the latter chiefly by aeroplane bombing. It was a well-known fact that the front line was the safest spot at Ypres, and the infantry gave the gunners many words of praise for their excellent "barrage" work during the attacks on Passchendaele. Towards the end of October the 48th Division changed places with the Canadians at Vimy, the artillery of the latter taking over battery positions at Zonnebeke. On Vimy Ridge a very pleasant month was spent, allowing the nightmare of Ypres to fade away.

The 48th and a few other divisions were now destined for Italy for the purpose of reinforcing our Allies, who were at this time being severely pressed. The 240th Brigade entrained at Arbigny, near Arras, on the 25th November, seven long trains being necessary to convey personnel, horses and guns, and the journey, which took six days and six nights, was made via Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, along the Riviera to Genoa, thence north to Arquata. A long march was then made, until the village of Presina, situated on the banks of the Brenta, was reached. By this time the Italians had made a stand along the Piave River, and the British were held in reserve to await developments. About a month later the 48th Division artillery went into action on the Piave, taking up positions between Spresiano and Nervesa, where nothing of very great importance happened. In the early spring it was found necessary to transfer the British troops to the mountains, and after a long and wearisome march the brigade found itself in action on the Asiago Plateau, the battery positions being situated between Mount Kaberlaba and the village of Cesuna.

On June 15th, at 3 a.m., the Austrians attacked in great force, their artillery work being especially heavy. Unfortunately, the Allies were about to take the offensive at the same time, and many British batteries, which had moved up close to our front line in readiness were captured by the enemy. Our gunners, however, got some excellent targets, the forward guns engaging the Austrians at point-blank range. In twenty-four hours the situation was completely restored, all the British guns



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being recaptured. A heavy bombardment lasting several days was carried out in order to prevent the enemy renewing his efforts, after which comparative calm reigned until the Allies made their final attack in Italy at the beginning of October. The great advance into Austria then took place and the 240th Brigade, who covered sixty miles through mountainous country in two and a half days, created the record of being the first brigade of British artillery to set foot in enemy territory on the whole of the Western Front. The gunners spent a considerable time in Italy after the Armistice was signed awaiting orders to proceed home for demobilisation. They started from Italy on March 24th, 1919, and the remnants of the old Bristol Artillery, after serving four years overseas, arrived at Southampton on April 1st, and were ordered to Gloucester.

### *2nd Line (61st Division).*

The 2/1st South Midland Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, (306th Brigade) was formed in October, 1914, and consisted of the nucleus of three batteries and a brigade ammunition column. Training was carried out with the 61st Division at Northampton, Chelmsford and Salisbury Plain. Early in 1916 18-pounder quick-firing guns were issued, and by this time the required establishments of horses and equipment were completed. Prior to embarkation for France in May, 1916, the King inspected the whole of the 61st Division, and after a march past, officers commanding units were presented to His Majesty.

On arrival in France the division was put into the line north of Neuve Chapelle for a probationary period. On July 19th, in order to assist the situation on the Somme, a demonstration by artillery and other troops was undertaken, in which the division suffered somewhat heavy losses. November, 1916, to January, 1917, found the division engaged in holding the line and in several minor operations in the sector between Thiepval and Courcellette (Somme). In February a sector opposite Chaulnes was taken over from the French. Here the enemy retired, and the division, after very successful fights, eventually occupied positions east of Holnon Wood, near St. Quentin. In July the division moved to Arras and occupied



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the line in the Guemappe sector, engaging in sharp fighting in the neighbourhood of Greenland Hill.

In the first week in August, 1917, the artillery went into the line at Admiral's Road, Wieltje, for the Third Battle of Ypres. They saw two months' service in this area, and in common with all other units in the neighbourhood were engaged in very strenuous fighting. The losses in personnel and horses and damage to equipment were considerable. The 61st Division, however, won the praise of several divisional commanders and of the superior command. Moreover, many immediate rewards for gallantry were granted to officers and men.

On November 10th the 306th Brigade received orders to march to Mety-en-Couture for the attack on Cambrai on November 20th. The brigade operated with the 51st Division and with the Guards Division, and assisted in the capture of Flesquières and Fontaine Notre Dame. Positions in and near Orival Wood (2,000 yards south of Bournon Wood) were ultimately reached. Here the brigade were subjected to very heavy and continuous bombardment, quite the most severe they had yet experienced. After very stubborn fighting and many changes of position, by which time the whole division had collected together, they were relieved at the end of December.

In January, 1918, the division entered the 18th Corps of the 5th Army, and took over from the French a familiar piece of line opposite St. Quentin. The great German offensive was threatened, and much work had to be done to the defences. On March 21st a bombardment, the most intense the division had at any time endured, began and continued all day. From this time until the end of April the divisional artillery experienced an exceedingly strenuous time. They retired, fighting the whole way, until the line was stabilised before Amiens (Villers Brettoneux). Great resistance was displayed by all troops of the 61st Division. The commander of the 18th Corps (Lieut.-General Ivor Maxse), in his résumé of the operations, wrote: "At that hour (4 p.m., March 21st) the garrisons (of forward zone redoubts, including trench mortar and anti-tank gun personnel) were told they might cut their way out at night, but except a few odd men no one returned from the three battalions whose duty it was to garrison the forward zone: they simply fought it out on the spot, and their heroism



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will live for ever in the annals of their regiments. They undoubtedly accounted for very great numbers of the enemy, but details are necessarily lacking: all we know for certain is that three battalions held up three enemy divisions all day on the 21st of March and prevented them from assaulting the battle zone of the 61st Division." Though the heroic battalions concerned were not local units, it should be recorded that they included quite a number of Bristol men.

In the Corps Commander's letter of commendation to the artillery the following appeared:—

"On the left divisional front an advanced 4.5 howitzer battery (D/307) was captured, and only a few survivors got away. A section of 18-pounders (A/307), however, turned its guns on to the position vacated by D/307 and did good execution on the enemy. This section in its turn had to retire to its main battery position, where it again shelled the enemy with good effect. Indeed, instances could be multiplied of similar disciplined tactics. On our left the loss of Maissemy by an adjoining division rendered necessary the withdrawal of the personnel of two other batteries of 307th Brigade, but later on with infantry assistance the position was recaptured, teams were brought up and the guns retrieved under heavy fire. This was a fine performance, of which the batteries have every reason to be proud. Little is definitely known of what befel the anti-tank guns and 6-inch howitzers in the forward zone, but we have a record of one anti-tank gun whose first target was hostile infantry at a range of fifty yards, when 50 rounds were used before the gun was destroyed. In another case an officer with an anti-tank gun (Lieut. T. S. Kilbee, 307th Brigade, who unhappily was killed) was last seen defending his piece with his revolver. . . . The French generals under whom our gunners served expressed verbally and in writing their admiration and gratitude for services rendered; and attributed the German failure to capture Moreuil on April 4th entirely to the effective shooting of the 306th Brigade."

During the summer of 1918 the division was engaged in the Lys area in finally stopping the enemy's advance and driving him back as far as Fleurbaix. From September until Armistice Day the 61st Division were in the 3rd Army in the Cambrai sector, and after successful open warfare the



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artillery of the 61st Division reached Feignies, three miles north-west of Maubeuge. Such is the war record of the Territorial Artillery of the 61st Division, in which so many Bristol men served. Numerous decorations were granted to officers and men who served in the division.

Battery A/308 was detached from the 61st Division early in 1917, and joining the 155th Brigade, became C/155. They took part in much heavy fighting, being in action at Serre, Puisieux au Mont, Arras, Messines, Wyschaete, Passchendaele, Ypres and Cambrai.

### THE BRISTOL HEAVY BATTERIES.

It was early in February, 1915, that the Bristol Citizens' Recruiting Committee were informed by the War Office that it would be agreeable if they could raise a battery of heavy artillery. Recruiting was not particularly brisk at the time, or the Committee would have preferred to raise a brigade of field artillery; but they acceded to the request of the authorities and made the necessary preparations. They wrote to Major H. W. K. Wait, who was then in command of a field battery in the 19th Division, and asked him to come to Bristol to command the new battery and to assist them in raising it. On March 9th the necessary transfer was approved by the Southern Command, and Major Wait took up his post in Bristol. Recruits at once began to come in, but only slowly, and it took a month to get 200 men. Offices and sleeping accommodation were provided at "The White City," Ashton Gate. In the middle of April recruiting suddenly became very active, partly owing to the stirring news of the stubborn and dauntless fighting of our armies in the Ypres salient, and partly owing to the dastardly sinking of the *Lusitania* by U-boats. The battery, which had received the official number of 127th Heavy Battery, rapidly filled to overflowing, and the Recruiting Committee sought and received instructions to raise another battery, to be called the 129th Heavy Battery. The personnel of both batteries was soon complete, the recruits consisting very largely of patriotic policemen, some from Bristol and some from the neighbouring counties, including a strong contingent from Gloucestershire. Captain



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Aldridge, who had been serving in the Somerset Light Infantry, and had been selected for a captaincy in the 127th Heavy Battery, was requested to take command of the 129th Battery. He had a few years previously retired from a lieutenancy in the Royal Navy. The two batteries were trained side by side in amicable rivalry. Lady Smyth's beautiful park was put at their disposal, and the batteries fully availed themselves of this excellent training ground and of other parts of the country in the neighbourhood of Ashton Court. Horses and vehicles began to arrive, and the batteries were taught as much as possible about riding and driving. Whilst quartered at Bristol, however, they had no guns, and could only learn the elements of gun drill on 4.7 guns, kindly put at their disposal at Avonmouth and Portishead by the officer commanding the Devon Heavy Artillery.

In August the 129th Battery were ordered to Woolwich. Directly afterwards the 127th Battery received orders to proceed to Cleadon in County Durham. They left on August 27th and on arrival were billeted in a large country house at Cleadon. They formed a unit for the defence of the North-east coast and were brigaded with a Liverpool battery, the 125th, quartered at Whitburn. The armament consisted of 4.7-inch guns. The horses were picketed in the open-air in an adjoining field, but the weather becoming very cold in November, the battery were moved into Sunderland. The 127th Heavy Battery remained in Sunderland until the spring of 1916, and drew the 40-pounder guns with which they were equipped from the Elswick Factory in Newcastle. In April they were ordered to Bordon, Hampshire, whence in May they marched to Larkhill, Salisbury Plain, to practise with the new guns. Before embarking for France they were inspected by Field-Marshal Lord French, who expressed satisfaction at their fine appearance and wished them the best of luck. May 26th, the day the battery embarked at Southampton, was the 300th anniversary of the foundation of the Royal Artillery, and as a special mark of the occasion each officer and man voluntarily gave one day's pay to the Royal Artillery Centenary Fund raised to help comrades disabled in the war. The battery were stationed at Steenwerck, near Armentières, and joined in the



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diversion undertaken by the Australian Division on July 1st to distract the attention of the enemy from the operations which the British began on the Somme that day. In the middle of August orders were received to proceed by train without horses, guns, and equipment to take over the guns, etc., of another battery which had been in the Battle of the Somme from the beginning. Much to the sorrow of officers and men, "Good-bye" had to be said to the horses, which had been with the battery since Bristol days and which were in the pink of condition. After two days and nights in the train the battery found themselves on the River Ancre, and took over guns at a position between Fricourt and Contalmaison. They remained there until September 15th, the day of the first Battle of the Tanks, and were subsequently pushed up to a position near Mametz Wood, and at the beginning of October to a position near High Wood.

Early in December, 1916, the 127th Heavy Battery were in action at Le Forest. They were continuously shelled, but the casualties were comparatively light, as good dug-outs were available. At the end of the month a new section arrived, making the battery one of six guns. They followed up the German retreat in the spring of 1917, and afterwards went to the coast, being in action at Boitschouche and behind Nieuport. In these positions several guns were knocked out by the heavy enemy shelling.

On March 22nd, 1918, the battery moved south to meet the German attack, and came into action at Bihucourt. After a retirement the battery took up a position near Souastre Fork. On April 5th they were heavily bombarded for nearly five hours and sustained several casualties, but the guns were kept in action all the time. During the next few months the battery remained in the immediate neighbourhood, and carried out a large amount of shooting both night and day. The battery took an active part in the great advance begun on August 21st, and successive occupied positions at Bucquoy, Achiet-le-Petit, Bihucourt, Biefvillers, Favreuil, Frenucourt, Havrincourt Wood, Gouzeaucourt Wood, Gonnelleu, the Hindenburg support line and Banteaux. On Armistice Day they were near Mormal Forest, and on November 20th began the march to the Rhine.

During their training at Woolwich the 129th Heavy Battery



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had their first experience of active service in three severe Zeppelin raids, during which bombs fell only a few hundred feet from their camp. The battery arrived in France on March 29th, 1916, and were ordered to relieve another battery at Annequin. On April 1st the battery marched up the La Bassée Road, and having been spotted by a German aeroplane, immediately came under shell-fire. They were afterwards in action in rear of the famous Cuinchy Brickstack and the Hohenzollern Redoubt (where they were heavily shelled), at Le Preol (beside the La Bassée Canal), and at Carency, at the foot of Vimy Ridge. The number of guns was then increased, and one section sent to Bouvigny Wood, the other remaining at Carency. Right up to the date of the Armistice the battery, which sustained many casualties, put in sterling work.

### SOUTH MIDLAND ROYAL ENGINEERS.

The South Midland Royal Engineers were in camp at Abergavenny when war broke out, and immediately returned to Bristol, where mobilisation was completed. They joined the South Midland Division at Swindon, and eventually proceeded to Chelmsford for training. In December, 1914, one company went out with the 27th Division. In March, 1915, another field company and the signal company went to the Front with the 48th Division, and were later rejoined in France by the original company and a third company which had been raised to make up the establishment of three companies for the division. On the departure of the 1st line units, 2nd line units were formed, ultimately becoming the 61st Division Royal Engineers, and they took the place at Chelmsford of the 1st line until they went to France in May, 1916. Of the original sixteen officers on mobilisation nine attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel and six that of major.

#### *1st Line (48th Division).*

The 48th Division Royal Engineers disembarked at Havre on March 31st, 1915, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel E. S. Sinnott, and a few days later were billeted at Coq de Paille, a village on the side of Mont des Cats, on the top of which is the famous Trappist Monastery. The 1st Field



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Company, who were in the line at Merris some miles away, marched over to see their comrades. The 2nd Field Company went to Ploegsteert, and on April 12th the headquarters of the Royal Engineers were moved forward to Outtersteene. On the 18th Lieut.-Colonel Sinnott left the division, becoming Assistant Director of Roads, and was succeeded in the command of the Royal Engineers by Lieut.-Colonel H. J. M. Marshall, Royal Engineers, who had commanded the Engineers of the 27th Division (including the 1st Field Company, South Midland Royal Engineers).

During May and June the Royal Engineers were in the Ploegsteert area, moving back to Lillers on June 30th. At this period the 1st Field Company joined the division, which thus became complete, having its own three field companies. On July 11th the division was ordered to Noeux-les-Mines, near Bethune, and in the same month moved to Hebuterne, farther south, where they remained (the Royal Engineer Headquarters being at Bus-les-Artois) until the end of March, 1916, when they were ordered to Couin, not far away. There they remained until the opening of the Battle of the Somme, in which they took part. In October the 1st Field Company were at Contalmaison and the other two companies at Mametz Wood. During November the headquarters were shifted to Lozenge Wood near Fricourt, and the field companies were at Bazentin and Martinpuich. During this period a great amount of work was done on dug-outs, tramways, trench-making and improvement, etc.

On December 16th, 1916, the 48th Division were relieved by the 15th Division and the Royal Engineer Headquarters were moved to Albert, but the 1st and 2nd Field Companies remained under the orders of the 15th Division and the 3rd Field Company worked under the direct orders of the Corps. In January, 1917, the 48th Division moved south of the Somme to take over more of the line from the French. In February a new line near Peronne was taken over and, the enemy having retreated, the Royal Engineer Companies did a considerable amount of bridging and road repairs to enable our troops to advance. The headquarters were moved forward to Peronne and shortly after to Tincourt and then Roisel, and heavy work was accomplished in respect of the water supply, sapping,



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roads, dug-outs, clearing up "booby" traps, billets and communications. The Signal Company for about the first time since landing in France were able to employ their cable wagons in laying cable according to the methods learned in England. In May a move was made to Beaulencourt, where defence work on the Beaumetz-Morchies line was carried on.

In July the Royal Engineers moved northward to take part in the Third Battle of Ypres, which began on July 31st and continued for three months. They remained in this area till the early part of October, and experienced their most dangerous and difficult task in the whole war, sustaining heavy casualties. It was during this period that the 474th Field Company, whose first commanding officer, Major Ernest Gardiner, had been killed at St. Eloi in March, 1915, suffered a similar loss in the death of Major H. Clissold, D.S.O., who was killed by shell-fire while engaged in work in the forward area. The section of the line occupied by the 48th Division was in front of St. Julien, and with the exception of one short spell of rest in the neighbourhood of St. Omer, the Royal Engineers were continuously employed in the very arduous work which the nature of the ground and the difficult conditions entailed. No one was sorry when in October the division were ordered to the Vimy sector, to take over a quiet portion of the line from the 2nd Canadian Division.

This was their last work in France, for after a month's work under conditions very different from Ypres, they entrained on November 23rd for Italy, travelling via Paris and Nice, arriving at Legnago on the 28th. Thence they marched to Pozzoleone, where they arrived on December 14th, and proceeded to become familiar with the country and the Italian methods of warfare, including the use of collapsible boats and communications in the mountains. During February the Royal Engineer units were stationed at Levada, and were engaged in constructing camp accommodation, arranging water supplies and rifle ranges, baths, dug-outs, observation posts for heavy artillery, etc. In March a move was made to Piazzola, and Major E. Briggs, D.S.O., was appointed to command the Royal Engineers in the place of Colonel Giles, who was at home ill. In April the Royal Engineers were at Tezze, where they were trained in rock drilling, mountain transport and the



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construction of cable ways. Eventually the headquarters were moved to Granezza, about five miles south-west of Asiago, and defence work in the forward area was taken over. During June the Royal Engineers took part in operations, but their strength was much reduced owing to an epidemic of fever which was prevalent throughout the division.

On the night of June 15th-16th the Austrians made their great effort to break the Allied line. The attack, which was preceded by a very heavy bombardment, met with some temporary success, but during the day the enemy were driven out and the line re-established. After a brief spell of rest in the plains in July the division returned to the Granezza area, and there the Royal Engineers remained during August, September and October, carrying out work mainly of a defensive character. On August 8th a party from the 475th Field Company assisted in a raid on enemy trenches and blew up a dug-out. On October 9th the division came under the orders of the 12th Italian Corps, and on the night of October 28th-29th the enemy evacuated the trenches opposite the 48th Division. The division immediately followed up the retiring Austrians, and although there was little actual fighting, the conditions and rapidity of the advance called for the utmost endurance from all, these strenuous days being terminated on November 4th by the Armistice signed with Austria on that day.

The division shortly after moved back and concentrated in a training area in the plains, headquarters moving to Valdagno. On November 25th the Royal Engineers were inspected by Major-General Wilson, and on the 27th the 475th Field Company took part in a review by the King of Italy at Castलगomberto Aerodrome. During January and February, 1919, the units remained at Valdagno and were gradually reduced to cadre strength. At the end of March the cadres proceeded to Bristol.

### *2nd Line (61st Division).*

Before the 1st Field Company left for France a 2nd line of engineer companies was being formed, men for these companies being recruited in Bristol and then sent to Chelmsford for training. They were trained in conjunction with the



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1st line companies until February, 1915, when they moved to Northampton and, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Seymour Williams, joined the 2nd South Midland Division, which subsequently became known as the 61st Division. That division went to the front in May, 1916, and in June took over the Neuve Chapelle sector, probably at that period one of the quietest bits of line. There is no doubt that during their four months on this sector the division livened things up. Divisional headquarters were at La Gorgue and two brigade headquarters were at Laventie. Opposite our lines the Boche held the Aubers Ridge and the strongly-fortified Bois du Biez.

The work in the line was that usually associated with trench warfare—nightly patrols, periodical raids on the enemy's trenches, work on trench construction and strafes by our trench mortars, etc. Mining was a feature of this sector of the front, and was carried out by two special mining companies Royal Engineers. The Boche was the first to start mining on this sector, and it was inevitable that we should counter-mine. Our mining was therefore really defensive, and consisted in protecting our front line by a series of galleries, and occasionally blowing in a suspected hostile gallery. The galleries were driven in a seam of blue clay, generally about twenty to thirty feet below ground. Owing to the difficulty caused by water, it was necessary to keep pumps going continually.

On July 1st, the day of the opening of the Battle of the Somme, there was a severe Boche strafe, evidently intended to destroy our mine-shafts, but though they were badly damaged, it was not many days before everything had been restored to order. Another Boche enterprise which took place about a month later was the blowing up at dawn of a large mine which caused the Mauquissart crater, which was considered the second largest on the front at the time, the largest being the Red Dragon crater at Givenchy.

The first battle in which the 61st Division took part was on July 19th, 1916, when in conjunction with an Australian Division they attacked the German front and support trenches opposite them immediately west of Fromelles. Apparently the idea was to make the Germans think the Aubers Ridge was to be attacked, and therefore cause him to bring up guns from the Somme, thus relieving the pressure there. Very heavy



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casualties were sustained in the attack, but the 61st Division were told afterwards that they had achieved their object, if not their objective, and that the enemy did actually bring forces up from the Somme. Sir Douglas Haig, in his despatch on the Somme Battle, referred to this "show" by the 61st Division as the most important minor operation of the year.

In October the 61st Division trekked southward and relieved the 18th Division, on the sector of which the ever-memorable Mouquet Farm may be considered the centre. The first night was spent by the sappers and pioneers assisting the 18th Division troops to link up ground captured just previously. The 61st Division remained on the Mouquet Farm sector till January, 1917. No important operation was undertaken, but it was a cold, wet winter, and the division experienced an arduous time on a front where enemy artillery was unpleasantly active. The divisional front extended as far as Thiepval on the left, and included the captured strong points Zollern, Schwaben and Stuff redoubts. Mouquet Farm above ground was "napoo," but below ground it was, together with the Wonderwork, near Thiepval, one of the best specimens of Boche dug-outs to be found on any part of the front.

At the end of February, 1917, the 61st Division relieved a French Division on the sector facing Chaulnes, and next month followed up the enemy in their rapid withdrawal. It was a busy time, for ground had to be made good as the advance progressed, bridges had to be built, road craters filled in, unexploded mines unloaded, and search made for the "booby" traps and delayed action mines which the enemy had left in his wake. When the Boches stopped the 61st Division held the long stretch of front from the Omignon River to the junction with the French immediately opposite St. Quentin. They remained on this front until May, carrying out minor enterprises near Fresnoy and Cepy Farm, on the outskirts of St. Quentin, and at the same time consolidating and improving their positions. Good work was done in laying the foundations of a system of trenches and strong points, to which they were destined to return eight months later. Moved to Arras, the 61st Division held the sector from Monchy-le-Preux to the Coieul River. The forward area had been freshly captured in the Battle of Arras, and the division, as at the Somme



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during the winter of 1916-17, were allotted the task of making good recently-captured ground, nibbling to get a little more, and consolidating.

During the first week of August, 1917, the division were ordered to the Ypres front, and the fighting during the few weeks they were in the Third Battle of Ypres was very strenuous and expensive. Bad weather continued during the whole time they were in the line, and the mud beggared description. Opposed to them were many concrete "pill-boxes," and the division had here their first experience of attacking those powerful little forts. When the division was withdrawn from Ypres after a very strenuous month their line had been somewhat advanced, but the progress was small in comparison with the efforts and casualties it had cost. The division had had very few opportunities of meeting many of their Bristol friends of the 48th Division, although the two divisions were near each other on the Somme at Christmas, 1916, and again in the spring of 1917 during the "follow-up" only a few miles separated them. In the Third Battle of Ypres only one division divided the two South Midland Territorial Divisions, and acquaintances were renewed, but on the whole the two divisions saw remarkably little of each other.

From Ypres the 61st Division returned to the line east of Arras, and at the end of November, when the Boche counter-attacked on the Cambrai front, were sent in haste to Bapaume. The division played a splendid part in holding up the enemy thrust, which was brought to a standstill after three or four days, and a line consolidated and wired west of La Vacquerie. Early in 1918 the 61st Division received orders to relieve again the French opposite St. Quentin. When the great German attack was launched on March 21st the defensive work and counter-attacks by the 61st Division were magnificent, and are recorded in numerous allusions in Sir Douglas Haig's despatch. In the second week in April the division was withdrawn from the line for a short rest, but soon found themselves in the thick of it once more in repelling the Boche push on the Lys. The divisional front developed, approximately, into the country between the Lys and the La Bassée Canal, and after a few days the enemy was brought to a standstill west of Calonne-sur-la-Lys. A series of outposts were dug



## THE MILITARY EFFORT

and gradually a trench system developed. A further attack by the Boche was not considered improbable, and all available labour was concentrated on defence works. Later the division took over the line east of the Forest of Nieppe and immediately north of their old St. Venant-Robecq sector, afterwards playing an heroic part in the final series of attacks towards Vendegies, which took place during the Allies' vast offensive, and doing splendid work in bridging, etc., After the Armistice the 61st Division were detailed to remain in France for many months on duty at base posts and on lines of communication.

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE REGIMENT.

#### 1ST BATTALION.

At the beginning of August, 1914, the 1st Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment (Lieut.-Colonel A. C. Lovett in command) who were stationed at Bordon, near Aldershot, were at Rushmore Camp carrying out brigade training. This battalion, the 1st Queen's, 1st South Wales Borderers, and 2nd Welch Regiment, formed the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Division, which with the 2nd Division constituted the 1st Army Corps of the original Expeditionary Force, which went to France in the first week of the war. The battalion served throughout the war in the 1st Division.

The battalion mobilised and entrained at Bordon during the night of August 12th, and embarked with the Welch Regiment on the *Gloucester Castle*. Havre was reached at midnight of August 13th, and the battalion encamped on the heights above the town until August 15th, when they entrained for the Front. The War Diary of the battalion, from which this account has been compiled, states under the same date: "The general tone of the French is very confident. The regiment met with great enthusiasm everywhere." From a diary kept by Captain A. H. Radice, the Adjutant, we learn that on disembarkation officers and men bivouacked in the goods sheds in the docks. A start was made in the morning for the rest-camps on the summit of the cliffs above the town. The battalion were accompanied through the streets of Havre by the shouting of the inhabitants: *Vive l'Angleterre!* *Sales Boches! Sacrés Boches!* men and women drawing



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

their hands across their throats to signify what should be done to the Germans at that moment pouring down towards France through tortured Belgium. As the troop train stopped at wayside stations on its way to the concentration area the inhabitants gathered on the platforms shouting, *Vive l'Angleterre !* At one station a civic reception was improvised ; the Syndic made a speech of welcome, and a bouquet of flowers was presented to Lieut.-Colonel Lovett by a little girl.

The battalion detrained at Le Nouvion, and as soon as the 1st Division had concentrated the march into Belgium began. On August 22nd the battalion reached Haulchin, and were ordered to entrench and hold the village at all costs. Haulchin was the extreme right of the British position, whose left wing rested on Mons. Here on the 24th the battalion first came into contact with the enemy and drew first blood, a patrol of Uhlans being ambuscaded by the outposts. Orders to conform with the retirement of the remainder of the force having been received, the battalion marched via Croix les Rouveroy, where the Queen's had taken up and entrenched a position. The Germans were following up closely. As soon as the rear party had passed through the Queen's lines a German cavalry patrol came up to within 500 yards. The Queen's opened fire, inflicting severe casualties. The 3rd Infantry Brigade were assembled at Bettigny and resumed their march via Gorgies Chaussé-Feignies to Neuf-Mesnil.

On August 26th the battalion occupied a position facing Landrécies and entrenched astride the road along a line of hedges, a section of the 54th Battery Royal Field Artillery actually placing its guns in the front line. It was here that the battalion sustained their first casualties, amounting to one killed and thirty wounded. "B" Company, which provided the covering party, were driven in, and Captain G. M. Shipway was mortally wounded. Private R. Lander greatly distinguished himself with two other men. He was the last to fall back, and, fighting all the way, greatly impeded the enemy's advance. Though wounded, he bayoneted several of his assailants before being overcome. He was picked up a little later covered with wounds and died next day in the ambulance. In the evening the brigade continued its retirement.



## THE MILITARY EFFORT

On September 6th the battalion had reached Rozoy. Previous orders for a further retirement were cancelled. The retreat had come to an end, and to everybody's satisfaction the Army was to advance. All fatigue and hardships were forgotten. Orders were received that the British Expeditionary Force would assume the offensive and co-operate with the French. There followed long marches across country and by field paths. At Ferme de Lille, on September 9th, an officer and nine men of the Guards Jägers, who had been cut off, surrendered. On September 13th the Aisne was recrossed by the towpath of the canal bridge near Bourgh, all other bridges having been destroyed; and next day began the critical fight for the Chemin des Dames, which lasted a fortnight, in which the battalion was hurried from place to place, wherever the German counter-attacks were most dangerous, from Troyon to the Chivy Valley and back again and thence to Moulin.

On September 27th Brigadier-General H. J. S. Landon published the following order: "I am intensely proud of the courageous spirit and stubborn endurance with which all battalions of the 3rd Brigade have faced the severe trials of the past fourteen days. The already famous battalions composing the brigade nobly added to their past history by their recent deeds, and this knowledge should brace them to face a continuance if necessary, and to renew efforts towards final defeat of the enemy. I am sure everyone knows how greatly I have felt for them in the hardships endured, and how deeply I deplore the loss of so many gallant comrades of all ranks."

The menace to the Channel ports necessitated the transfer of the British troops to Belgium. On October 14th the battalion, then in close touch with the French at Moulin, were relieved by French troops and transferred to Flanders by train. By the 21st the 3rd Brigade were again in the firing-line. They received orders to attack the station and village of Poelcapelle. The Gloucesters, who were at first in reserve, attacked and captured the farm of Koeuit, taking some prisoners. On October 23rd, while in reserve at Pilkem, near Langemark, part of the battalion was hurried forward to fill a gap. The Germans made desperate massed attacks, but were repulsed and retired. Had it not been for this brave and successful defence the situation in this part of the line



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

would have been most critical, and two platoons of "A" Company and one of "D" Company under Captain Rising were personally thanked by the General Officer Commanding for their gallant conduct.

Sir John French issued the following order: "The Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief wishes once more to make it known to all the troops under his command how deeply he appreciates the bravery and endurance which they have again displayed since their arrival in the northern theatre."

On October 25th the battalion marched towards Ypres, and occupied trenches north-west of Gheluvelt. At the end of the month came further fighting of a very severe character. On the 29th, under cover of a thick fog, the Germans rushed the forward trenches of the 1st Brigade, and would have made good progress if they had not been stopped by the splendid counter-attack delivered by the 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment. By nightfall the line had been re-established.

On October 31st, owing to the severity of the fighting, the 3rd Brigade had become very scattered. During the afternoon the battalion entrenched on both sides of the Veldhoek cross-roads. The remains of the brigade formed behind this line and held it until relieved, despite heavy and continuous German attacks. It was here that Major R. M. S. Gardner was killed whilst leading his company in a gallant counter-attack. General Lomax was wounded, Brigadier-General Landon took over the command of the division, and Lieut.-Colonel Lovett succeeded to the command of the brigade, Major J. O'D. Ingram taking over the command of the Gloucesters. From November 1st to November 5th the battalion remained in Heronthage Wood, being continually called up by day and night to support the 1st Brigade and parts of the 7th Division on the Veldhoek line. The extent of the casualties which the battalion had suffered may be gathered from the fact that, although drafts had arrived, the Gloucesters were at this time only about 300 strong, and 200 men who arrived as a draft went straight into action. On November 5th the battalion marched to Zillebeke to reinforce the line which had been broken through by the Germans. They were held up by machine-gun fire and barbed wire in two attacks designed to clear the Germans out of the wood just east of Zillebeke, and



## THE MILITARY EFFORT

afterwards lay out in the open. On the night of November 7th only 213 answered to their names out of the 512 who had gone into action on that day; nevertheless, there was little rest for the shattered regiment. On November 11th they were moved through the grounds of Hooze Château to support a counter-attack against the Prussian Guards on the left of the Ypres-Menin road. On November 16th they marched to Ypres and thence to Locre.

December found the battalion reformed and training at Outersteene. On the 15th of that month they were ordered to Festubert to retake certain trenches. This feat they accomplished, though not without heavy casualties, and were thanked by Sir Douglas Haig for "conspicuously gallant services."

In 1915 the battalion settled down to trench warfare in France. A brief entry made in the War Diary in January is as follows: "Weather conditions still extremely bad for trenches, men undergoing great hardships during their forty-eight hours on duty owing to wet and sharp frosts at night. In spite of this all ranks are most cheerful."

During this month the battalion recaptured Givenchy by a brilliant counter-attack, which again won them the praise of Sir John French. On March 10th they held the enemy during the attack on Neuve Chapelle, and in May were again complimented for their attack on the enemy's trenches in front of Rue de Bois. After another long period of trench warfare the Gloucesters took part in September in the Battle of Loos, and with great gallantry worked behind the Germans, who were holding up the attack of the 2nd Brigade. For several days they were heavily engaged and on October 5th they moved on to Loos, where they drove off a formidable German attack with rifle fire.

The first weeks in 1916 were spent in training or in the trenches, where bad weather, heavy shelling, gas attacks, mines, and raids were endured. In July the battalion were fiercely engaged in the Battle of the Somme, and once more received congratulations for their splendid work. The battalion attacked High Wood on September 8th, losing 252 officers and men out of 343, or over seventy-five per cent. of their strength, and received congratulations upon their heroism



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

from Sir Henry Rawlinson. The battalion played a conspicuous part in the fighting round Contalmaison, Pozières and Eaucourt L'Abbaye.

During the German retreat in 1917 the battalion fought at Peronne, Messines, Nieuport and Passchendaele.

The desperate German "push" begun in March, 1918, was continued in April, and it was on the 18th of that month that the Gloucesters, at Festubert, again earned undying glory. They fought back to back and saved the line, thus a second time justifying the privilege granted their predecessors, the 28th Foot, in 1801, of wearing the badge of the regiment on the back as well as on the front of their head-dress.

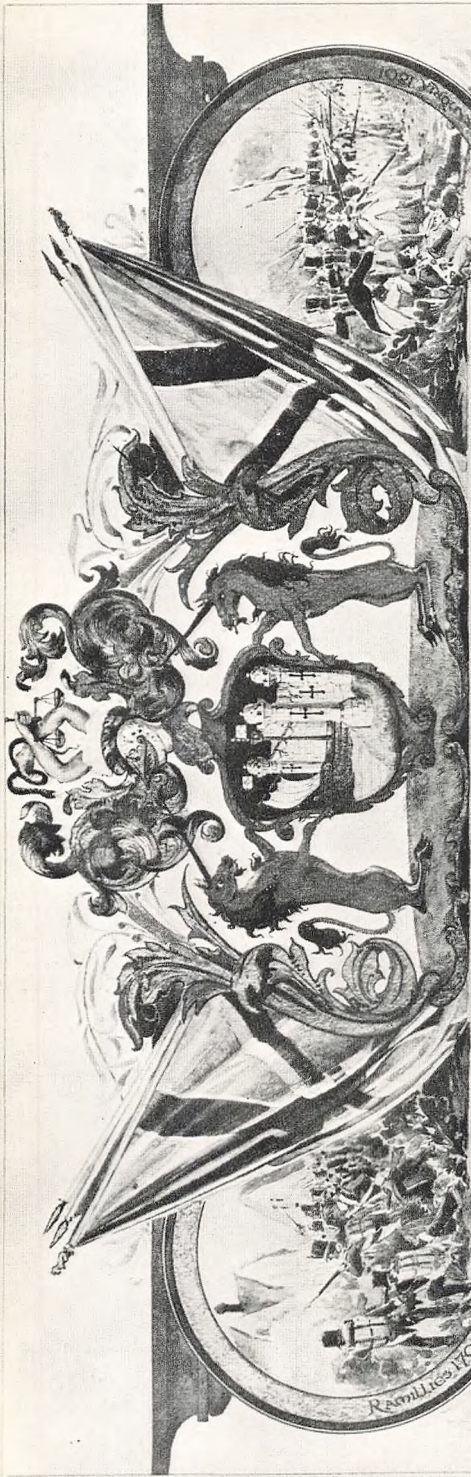
The battalion were holding a part of the line which ran back at right angles to the general line of the front. On the night of the 17th a patrol captured a German sergeant-major, who revealed that an attack was impending. The enemy led off with a four-hour intense bombardment of our battery positions and back areas. Enormous quantities of gas shells (Yellow X) were used, with the result that the whole of the divisional artillery was almost at once put out of action; a single gun, served by a wounded officer and an orderly, remained in action. Lieut.-Colonel J. L. F. Tweedie, D.S.O., who was in command of the battalion, gave orders for the men to move out into the shell-holes in front of the trenches, thus avoiding the heavy bombardment directed against these to cover the advance of the infantry. By nine o'clock the enemy had made considerable progress; he had stormed a strong point on the left and was working forwards in rear of "D" Company and towards battalion headquarters. Company-Serjeant-Major Biddle, of "D" Company, pluckily made a successful attempt to reach Battalion Headquarters to ask for assistance to check this advance. "C" Company, who were in battalion reserve, were by this time heavily engaged; nevertheless, Captain K. A. R. Smith, its commander, with C.S.M. Biddle and Sergeant Cole collected twelve men—cooks, orderlies, batmen, all who could be spared—and advancing west of Festubert, checked the enemy's advance.

The enemy had also broken through the line on the right, thus cutting all communications with the rear. The two pigeons which were released were blown to pieces in the air









• The Lord Mayor, Sheriff and Citizens of Bristol, joyfully welcome home the Officers, Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of the Gloucestershire Regiment. They have watched with keen interest and admiration the movements of this celebrated Regiment, of which you are the Senior Battalion. Many of your number are closely identified with the ancient City of Bristol, and we are proud to know that the honour and traditions of the old 28<sup>th</sup> have been fully upheld and maintained during the Great War. When the War broke out your battle honours were amongst the most famous in the annals of the British Army, but you have added to them a long roll of names of many famous fights that will live for ever in the history of our country. The famous feat of arms which gained the distinction of the "Back Badge" at the battle of Alexandria, under Abercrombie, was repeated at Festubert in 1918, on which occasion the Brigadier General commanding your Brigade wrote as follows:—

<sup>6</sup>To O.C. 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Gloucestershire Regt.

"I wish again to express my admiration for the gallant defence put up by your battalion yesterday. The tenacity with which they held their positions when attacked in front, flank and rear by four regiments [as officially stated by the corps] has earned the praise of commanders of all grades. Under the peculiar



April 19<sup>th</sup> 1918.

The great struggle through which you have passed must have tested the courage & endurance of all who have taken part and it was only the maintenance of those qualities, joined with the tenacity and doggedness which have always characterised the British Soldier, which gave us the magnificent victory, so gloriously achieved, in conjunction with our brave Allies. On this historic occasion we cannot forget those who left their country at the call of duty and Honour and will never return. (We extend to the relatives of these brave men our heartfelt sympathy, and are trust that they will find comfort in the knowledge that but for the sacrifice and dauntless part born by their loved ones, the Honour, Glory and Freedom of Old England would have been lost.

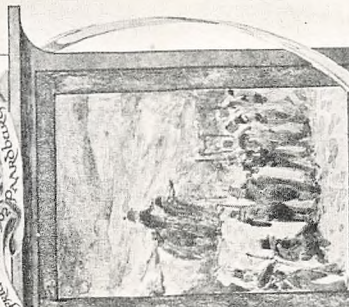


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England would have been lost.



Egypt,



1853







## THE MILITARY EFFORT

by shells. Brigade headquarters reported the battalion as having been annihilated. By noon the attack had been definitely repulsed by the incomparable valour and tenacity of the Gloucestershire men. The Germans, who had got to within thirty yards of our trenches and had completely isolated the battalion, knew themselves beaten. Then was seen the amazing spectacle of the men standing on the parapet shouting to each other and picking off the enemy with their rifles as they attempted to crawl from shell-hole to shell-hole in flight. Very few, if any, got away.

In reference to this glorious defence, Lieut.-Colonel Tweedie received the following message from the Brigadier: "I wish again to express my admiration for the gallant defence put up by your battalion yesterday. The tenacity with which they held their positions when attacked in front, flank and rear by four regiments has earned the praise of commanders of all grades. Under the peculiar circumstances of the sector you held, it was fortunate that a battalion which had previously fought under similar conditions should have been in the line. All ranks fought as though mindful of the emblem they wear, and fully justified the wearing of it. I trust your casualties were not as heavy as might have been expected."

The number of Military Medals awarded to the battalion constitutes a record.

During the great advance the battalion took part in what is known as the Cambrai-St. Quentin Battle, and particularly in the storming of the Hindenburg line. South of Bellenglise the Hindenburg system had a depth of some ten kilometres, the main line being formed by the St. Quentin Canal. The battalion attacked on September 14th, 15th, 24th and 30th, capturing successive lines all heavily wired and fortified; then the 1st Brigade took the lead and crossed the Canal. 35,000 prisoners and 380 guns were captured during this battle.

On Armistice Day the battalion were in billets at Fresnoy le Grand, and afterwards marched to the Rhine. The cadre of the battalion returned to England on June 9th, 1919. On June 10th they were welcomed by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of Bristol at the Council House, and were presented with an illuminated address. The Bristol Recruiting



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

Committee entertained them at luncheon on the same day at Horfield Barracks.

The losses of the 1st Battalion during the war were as follows :—

Killed	..	..	998
Prisoners		under	90

### 2ND BATTALION.

The 2nd Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel G. S. Tulloh, were serving at Tientsin when the war broke out. On September 15th, 1914, they embarked at Ching-Wang-Tao under orders for India, but on reaching Colombo they were ordered to England, where they went under canvas at Hursley Park, Winchester. On December 18th the battalion sailed from Southampton and reached Havre next day. They were speedily to experience the terrible hardships of trench warfare in Belgium in the winter, specially emphasised in their case by the fact that they had just come from the sunny East. It was on January 10th, 1915, that they went into the trenches about one mile south of Voormezele. In those trenches the Gloucesters found themselves knee-deep in water and mud, and significant entries in the regimental War Diary are : "All companies fitted men for boots over two pairs of socks"; "braziers in trenches useless, as they sink into the mud." It is not surprising that at the end of the month many of the men were suffering from bad feet. After a spell in trenches at Dickebusch, the battalion returned to Voormezele, where they sustained many casualties through shell-fire. The strength of the battalion on February 12th was officers 22, other ranks 538. On March 3rd the Gloucesters played a valuable part in the repulse of the German heavy attack upon St. Eloi and the neighbouring mound. Germans who had captured one of their trenches were completely wiped out by two platoons of "C" Company, commanded by Lieutenant Greenland. The battalion put in very effective rifle fire from their trenches, and afterwards took part in the counter-attack. On Easter Sunday the Gloucesters moved to Ypres, and on May 2nd they were in Sanctuary Wood,



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where they sustained severe casualties in several days of intermittent fighting. On May 9th they were heavily attacked, but beat off the enemy, killing many of them. After taking part in the desperate fighting near Château, the battalion were moved to Armentières, where they experienced more trench warfare in the Rue du Bois section.

On November 26th, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel F. C. Nisbet (Lieut.-Colonel Tulloh had been killed in action), the battalion embarked at Marseilles as a unit of the Salonika Expeditionary Force. They landed at Salonika on December 15th, and shortly afterwards helped to make the new road to Akbunar. On December 28th they marched into camp on the Monastir road. An interesting entry in the battalion's War Diary under date of January 2nd is not without its humour: "Lieutenant G. H. Oxley, in command of guard over German Consulate, found the German flag on the roof of the Consulate. The difficulty of removing the flag (owing to French sections being on guard there) was overcome by Corporal Young (corporal of the guard) tying the flag round his portly person and marching away without being seen. Lieutenant Oxley also found the Bulgarian flag at the Bulgarian Consulate and brought it away. Both these flags were sent to England."

After a laborious spell of road-making near Kapudzilar, the battalion (now under the command of Lieut.-Colonel K. M. Davie) reached Jajkin on April 15th, 1916, and participated in the toilsome and harassing operations in the Struma Valley. The enemy's forces were distributed along the frontier between the River Vardar and the River Struma. About 2,000 Comitadjis had crossed the frontier, and half that number were operating between the River Galiko and the Struma. The Gloucesters marched on Jajkin as a unit of the force ordered to protect the right flank of the army on its advance towards the line Demir-Hissa-Seres. Following many hardships and much hard work on fortifications, on September 10th the battalion participated in a successful demonstration in force designed to test the hostile forces in the Struma Valley, and also to prevent any portion of those forces from being moved to other theatres of war. On September 30th the Gloucesters and the 2nd Cameron Highlanders crossed the Struma by the gun bridge erected by Royal Engineers on the preceding day. After



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suffering casualties from enfilade fire on both flanks, the Gloucesters pushed on through the village of Bala and captured the Bulgarian trenches. The position was consolidated, and General Milne visited the trenches and congratulated the battalion upon their work both during the attack and afterwards. On October 30th, in order to assist the 28th Division in operations against Barakli-Dzuma, the Gloucesters moved forward to Homondos, where they dug in along the line of the railway and patrolled the wood, subsequently advancing over 2,000 yards. After being in the 81st Infantry Brigade for two years, on November 2nd the battalion were transferred to the 82nd Infantry Brigade. In December came a period of severe fighting in the woods, "Rabbit Wood" being taken and occupied by the Gloucesters, who also attacked the Tumbsta position. During 1917 the battalion were frequently in the front line, and at other times were hard at the inevitable work on fortifications and roads. Their platoon team won the Divisional Musketry Championship. The battalion had to endure most trying weather, ranging from great heat to devastating blizzards. The experiences of 1918 were much the same as those of the previous year, until there came the great advance, in which they joyfully participated. On September 30th they received information that hostilities in Bulgaria were to cease, and on October 1st the peace with Bulgaria was signed.

General Milne received from the Army Council the following telegram: "The War Cabinet wish me to convey to you and all ranks under your command their heartiest congratulations on the decisive success which has at last crowned the operations of the British forces in Macedonia. In common with their allied comrades in arms, they have for three years sustained the burden of an arduous campaign in an unhealthy climate without the stimulus of great offensive operations and with few opportunities for leave. The endurance and devotion of the troops have now secured the most far-reaching results, which will profoundly influence the course of the war in favour of the Allied cause."

Major-General G. Forestier Walker issued the following order: "Through long spells of digging under intense heat, through weary weeks of holding defensive lines, harassed by



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fever and with leave only after years and only to the lucky few, the division has never lost its confidence, its cheeriness, its discipline, or its splendid offensive spirit. . . . Where all troops have done so well, it is invidious to specify particular units, but I feel it only just to say that the raiding and patrol work, carried out night after night by all three Infantry Brigades during the delicate period when the bulk of the artillery was absent, constitute an example of skill, enterprise and endurance for any army in any age."

In January, 1919, the Gloucesters were ordered to Batum, whence they moved to Tiflis, where demobilisation began. Early in July the cadre of the battalion arrived at Chiseldon, Wilts.

### 4TH (CITY OF BRISTOL) BATTALION (T.F.).

When the order to embody the Territorial Force was given, not a single man of the 4th Gloucesters failed to parade. Thus was proved the motto of the battalion, "In Danger Ready."

The number of would-be recruits who presented themselves in the first few days was enough to form several battalions, but at first it was only possible to take a limited number to bring the strength up to war establishment and to form the first reinforcement. Soon, however, authority was given to form a reserve battalion, and recruits could again be enlisted. Later it was decided to convert this "2nd Line" battalion into a fighting unit, and to raise a "3rd Line" battalion as a reserve. In the rapid expansion of Britain's armies and the creation of new special and technical units there was a constant drain on the older formations to supply qualified men as instructors or to form a nucleus. When the groups were called up under the Derby Scheme and afterwards recruits were allotted to reserve units for training.

### *1st Line (48th Division).*

The original battalion under the command of Lieut.-Colonel J. B. Butler, T.D., which became the 1/4th, was hurried across to the East Coast to form a unit of the Army of Home Defence. This was the real purpose of the Territorial Force, but the emergency was so great that the



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battalion was invited to take the foreign service obligation. A large number had done so individually before August, 1914. The response was magnificent, the battalion volunteering almost to a man. Then followed months of ruthlessly hard training at Danbury, during the whole of which the 4th, as senior battalion of the brigade, had the doubtful honour of carrying the full quota of ammunition at all times, presumably in case of invasion.

The battalion left Essex on the last day of March, 1915, arriving in France the same evening. In these early days a very short visit of instruction to the trenches had to suffice, and after being the guests of the troops holding the line near Armentières, the 48th Division, to which the battalion belonged, took over their first sector at Ploegsteert. Handing this over in June to the Canadians, the division after one turn opposite Messines started a long trek, halting to dig trenches near Lens just before the Loos offensive. After holding the line opposite Serre for about a month, the division settled down in the Hebuterne sector at the beginning of September, and remained there until February 11th, 1916. Short visits to the trenches near Hannescamps, Serre and Gommecourt provided a change before returning once more to Hebuterne for another month. During all this period the 48th had very little rest, even in the army sense of the word, and in July they moved south to take part in the Battle of the Somme. The 4th attacked on the 17th, 18th and 22nd of July at Ovillers, each time with the greatest success, capturing a machine-gun on the latter date. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle says of the period July 22nd to 25th: "The 4th Gloucesters particularly distinguished themselves at this time by their persistent day by day work against the German trench line." Returning to the same part of the line on August 9th, after a week's rest at Franqueville, two companies attacked on the 16th, again doing well, though with heavy losses. On the 21st the battalion attacked the Leipzig Redoubt, capturing it and 150 prisoners. The enemy counter-attacked next day, but were repulsed, leaving seventeen more prisoners in the hands of the 4th. In the Mailly sector the battalion were badly gassed, and were withdrawn for a month from the front line. The month of October was spent in the old haunts opposite Gommecourt, after which came a



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return visit to the Albert district—Le Sars, where the mud was terrible—Contalmaison, Martinpuich, Mametz Wood. Christmas having been spent at Fricourt, January, 1917, found the division in the Peronne district. On the enemy retreating in March, the battalion followed him through Peronne, Cartigny, and Tincourt to Villers-Faucon, and on the 30th attacked, and took St. Emilée, capturing a machine-gun (now at battalion headquarters) and five cavalry horses with equipment, with a loss of ninety men. After a successful attack near Epéhy, Ronsoy was taken on the 13th. A great discomfort in this area was the number of chemical bombs left by the enemy, which exploded many days after he had left. May and June were spent in the Peronne and Bapaume areas, and in July the battalion distinguished itself in another field at Blaireville, winning prizes in nine events out of fourteen at a Brigade Horse Show, before a strenuous time in the bogs near Ypres. After refitting at Nielles, near Calais, the battalion returned to take part in the Third Battle of Ypres. In this great battle nearly half the effectives were lost. To quote Sir Arthur Conan Doyle again: "The 48th South Midland Territorials had a most difficult advance over the marshy valley of the Stroombeck, but the water-sodden morasses of Flanders were as unsuccessful as the chalk uplands of Pozières in stopping these determined troops. Warwicks, Gloucesters and Worcesters, they found their way to the allotted line. Winchester Farm was the chief centre of resistance conquered in this advance."

The battalion then moved into trenches at Vimy Ridge, but the division were withdrawn after five weeks, and sent to Italy. The first couple of months in this country were spent in reserve to the mountain portion of the front, but in March 1918, the battalion were ordered suddenly to the Piave. Returning from here in April, various trench sectors on the Asiago plateau were held from the 22nd onwards. After marching to the plains for a short rest, at the beginning of June the brigade were rushed up in lorries at a few hours' notice to where the enemy had broken through, retaking the position and capturing many prisoners. A period of raids, etc., followed, and in November the grand drive commenced. For five days the division advanced, capturing prisoners, guns, stores, and



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transport, until the signing of the Armistice put an end to the triumphant march. The battalion then withdrew to Cornedo, near Vicenza, and were gradually reduced to a cadre of four officers and 46 other ranks by the despatch of demobilisation drafts. On March 26th the cadre left for England, and after five days' railway journey disembarked at Southampton on the 31st of the month, the fourth anniversary of the battalion's crossing to France.

### *2nd Line (61st Division).*

The 2/4th battalion were formed as a reserve to the 1st line under the command of Lieut.-Colonel R. Stotesbury, T.D., but their status was soon changed to that of a Home Service Battalion, and later to that of a General Service Battalion in the 183rd Brigade, 61st Division. After a period of training combined with duties of home defence at various stations, the battalion left Tidworth for overseas on May 23rd, 1916, embarking at Southampton the same evening. It was at this time the enemy submarines were making determined efforts to interrupt the cross-Channel services, and the transports were ordered to return to port after half the journey was completed, while the senior service rounded up a couple of U-boats which had succeeded in entering the English Channel. This "little matter" being settled in the usual naval manner, the battalion again left Southampton on the evening of the 25th, disembarking the following morning.

The last day of May saw the battalion in the trenches for instruction near Festubert, and on June 15th they took over their own sector, just north of Neuve Chapelle. On July 4th "C" Company carried out a raid on the enemy trenches, and received the congratulations of the Corps Commander on its success. These congratulations were repeated on the 13th, as the raid had been proved to be far more successful than was at first supposed. On the 19th an assault was made, and casualties were rather heavy. During the next three months several raids were carried out from Croise Barbée near La Gorgue. The next move was to the neighbourhood of Albert, where turns in the trenches were taken at Grandcourt, Thiepval and near the Zollern Redoubt.



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Early in 1917 the 61st were proceeding by march route northwards, but were turned back to relieve the French at Pressoire, near Vermandovillers. On March 17th definite information was received that the enemy had vacated his line, and fires were observed in his back areas. The battalion advanced successfully to Potte, Croix-Molignaux, Mouchy-Lagache, and Coulaincourt. Villages and everything in the way of shelter had been destroyed, and the only protection obtainable was the hastily-erected bivouacs. An attack ordered for April 2nd was rendered unnecessary because the objectives were occupied with ease by cavalry patrols, and the battalion advanced to Martevillo through rain and snow. On the 6th Fresnoy was occupied. Various moves in this area followed, until the division were withdrawn and sent northward.

After a period of trekking and training the division moved to Ypres in support of the 36th division, and on August 17th went into the line near Wieltje, having the 48th Division on their left. An attack was launched on Pond Farm and met with only moderate success, the pill-boxes and strength of the enemy wire causing very heavy losses. After taking part in another attack in the same neighbourhood a week later, the battalion were relieved by the 2/6th Gloucesters and at the end of the month the division were withdrawn to Branhoek for rest and refitting. In fourteen days the battalion had lost in killed, wounded and missing half the officers and nearly a third of their total other ranks.

After seven days' rest, followed by a comparatively quiet period in the line, orders were received for a move to the region of Arras. Before leaving the Ypres sector a football match was played between the 1/4th and 2/4th.

In the new sector the battalion relieved the West Yorkshires of the 17th Division, and did some useful patrol work. In a raid towards the end of October an enemy machine-gun was put out of action with all its crew. Relieved by the 15th Division, the 61st moved to Bapaume at the end of November. The enemy having broken through at Gouzeaucourt, the battalion were hurried in motor-buses and lorries via Trescault to Havrincourt Wood, where the line, recaptured the previous day, was taken over from small scattered parties.

Then followed incessant fights at the blocks in the



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communication trenches. A peculiar position arose here the following day. The enemy launched a strong attack on the next battalion, and secured that portion of the line, and for twenty-four hours the 2/4th hung on, in spite of the bombing attacks of the enemy in the same trench as themselves. A heavy attack compelled a general retirement of the brigade to the old British line. The battalion were congratulated on their work by the Divisional General, who stated that their stubborn resistance had been of the greatest assistance to the whole corps. The cost, however, was very great, numbers being so reduced that the battalion were temporarily reorganised into five weak platoons. A fortnight later the division were relieved by the Naval Division, and were withdrawn for a prolonged rest. In February, 1918, owing to the weakness in numbers of many units, a general re-organisation of divisions and brigades was made, and the 2/4th were disbanded.

### *3rd Line.*

The 3rd Line was raised by Lieut.-Colonel Butler, and went into camp at Malvern. The work of a draft-finding unit is one of unceasing toil, and the rapid conversion of civilians into soldiers entails a great deal more than putting them into uniform and teaching them to distinguish the left foot from the right. In addition to the training of recruits, the hardening of returned Expeditionary Force men, who had recovered from wounds or sickness, and refreshing their training with rifle and bomb had to be undertaken by the reserve units, as well as the training in regimental and fighting duties of the new officers. Another duty which fell to the reserve battalion was that of keeping in readiness a composite company for any emergency service, no light task, as men as soon as trained were sent away on draft. The battalion went into billets at Cheltenham and later at Weston-super-Mare, and camped at Windmill Hill, near Ludgershall, in April, 1916. Colonel Butler, whose health was suffering under the strain, relinquished the command of the battalion in July, but after the change of a few months of civilian life he was again in uniform, resigning the office of Sheriff of Bristol to take up a post on the lines of communication in France.



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In September the 3rd lines of the 4th, 5th and 6th battalions were amalgamated into one, the 4th Reserve Battalion.

The amalgamated battalion removed to Cheltenham, where they remained until the new year, the next station being Catterick, in Yorkshire. This was left in July, 1917, for a canvas camp at Horton, near Blyth, then quarters in Seaton Delaval. Here, as part of No. 3 Section, Tyne Garrison, another duty, coast defence, was added to the already variegated list. The cessation of actual hostilities removed the need for coast defence, and after the period of a few months, the 4th Reserve Battalion were disbanded in April, 1919, all personnel being demobilised, or transferred to the 3rd (Special Reserve) Battalion.

### 6TH BATTALION (T.F.).

Although the youngest pre-war battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment, none were more proud of regimental history and traditions than were "The 6th." When hardly formed, the 6th Battalion had to a man volunteered for South African service. They were the first battalion in the country to reach full strength under the Territorial scheme, and 1914 found the great majority of officers and men the proud wearers of the Imperial Service Badge, and already prepared to serve abroad if required. Within twenty-four hours of mobilisation in the fateful August of 1914, Lieut.-Colonel H. C. Woodcock, the Commanding Officer, was able to wire to the War Office the battalion's second offer for service overseas, and the eagerness and enthusiasm of all ranks was intense. Mobilisation plans, long since worked out and elaborated, were carried out with clockwork precision, and within a week the battalion, complete in transport and equipment, were at Swindon, their appointed war station. Their colours had first been deposited at the Bristol Council House for safe keeping, and enough would-be recruits had been left behind to form almost a second battalion. From Swindon there was a speedy move to the then unprotected east coast, where defence construction and hard training under war conditions occupied several months.

The early part of 1915 found the 6th tough and ready for anything, and their bearing and efficiency won enthusiastic comment from Sir Ian Hamilton. An inspection by His Majesty



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the King raised eager hopes, and at last the long-looked-for orders arrived, and with the remainder of the Gloucester and Worcester Brigade the battalion embarked for France on March 31st.

### *1st Line (48th Division).*

Within a week or two the Bristol men had had their first taste of real war, and the end of April found them holding an important sector of the line abutting upon the famous "Plugstreet" Wood. From Ploegsteert a move was made to Messines, thence to the Bethune district, and afterwards to the Hebuterne sector, in which there was a six months' stay. During all this time the British army, mainly Regular and Territorial, were thinly spread out along a line which the Boche battered in vain, and welcome indeed were the Kitchener units and the much-needed big guns and ammunition which gradually began to arrive. By the end of 1915 the original battalion were much depleted by death and wounds, but their fighting spirit was unimpaired. With the 6th lies the honour of being the battalion to organise and carry out the first of the series of raids which soon became such a terror to the enemy. This was in November, 1915, when 100 men and 2 officers penetrated and cleared a long length of enemy trench near Hebuterne. The surprise was complete and the estimated casualties to the enemy were over seventy in killed, wounded and prisoners at a cost to the 6th of one killed, one missing and eighteen wounded. The whole of the latter, which included signallers who had established telephonic communication with battalion headquarters from the very parapet of the German trench, were safely brought back. This achievement resounded throughout France, and from each of the Divisional, Corps and Army Commanders, as well as from Lord French himself, came messages of congratulation and praise. In July, 1916, the battalion moved southwards to participate in the Somme Battle. They went "over the top" on the night of July 20th-21st and again on the night of the 22nd-23rd, doing magnificent work, but at a fearfully heavy cost. In the second of these attacks the two leading companies lost every officer and a third company all save one, whilst casualties amongst N.C.O.'s and men were proportionately



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heavy. The remnants of the battalion were then withdrawn from the line to billets, where new drafts of officers and men were incorporated. On August 14th the battalion again attacked near Ovillers, and in the same district between August 20th and 23rd sustained very heavy counter-attacks by the enemy, all of which were successfully repulsed.

Operations in the districts of Thiepval, Albert, Le Sars and other well-known places followed at intervals, and early in 1917 a new sector was taken over from the French at the extreme right of the British line. Here great activity prevailed, as it was known that the enemy contemplated retirement to his much-advertised Hindenburg Line. On March 17th La Maisonnette was attacked and captured. When the big move began the 6th Battalion, with other units of the 48th Division, were close upon the enemy's heels, and, passing through Peronne, attacked and captured the important town-ship of Epéhy on April 1st.

On April 17th tragedy in its grimmest form overtook the battalion, then resting at Villers-Faucon. At 3.55 a.m. on that date the cellar occupied as battalion headquarters was blown up by a delayed fuse German mine, and Lieut.-Colonel Nott, D.S.O., the Commanding Officer, with his entire staff, Major, Adjutant, Medical Officer, Padre, and Bombing Officer, were killed. The Adjutant was Captain Nott, brother of the Colonel, and the younger brother had previously been killed with the battalion. After other operations in the same region entailing several attacks upon the new German positions, the battalion were withdrawn for a much-needed rest.

In the Third Battle of Ypres, from July to October, 1917, the 1/6th saw much service. The fighting conditions of this period are impossible to describe adequately. The Ypres salient had become an abomination of desolation and death. Vast water-logged areas intersected with ridges and patches of treacherous yellow mud formed the ground upon which men lived and fought slowly forward. Trenches and earthworks were impossible to construct, and the only effective shelters from shells and weather were the German "pill-boxes" and concrete galleries which one by one fell into British hands. The battalion's final work in this sector was an attack near



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Poelcapelle on October 9th, in which seventy prisoners and twelve machine-guns were captured.

After short periods in the trenches at Vimy and south-west of Lens the 1/6th entrained for Italy on November 23rd. Here more than a year was spent by the battalion, who took part in repelling the Austrian offensive of June, 1918, and also in the great Piave victory of the following November. Between 3,000 and 4,000 prisoners, nearly 100 guns, and much material were captured by them during the Austrian débâcle which followed. From Italy most of the 48th Division returned to England for demobilisation, but the 1/6th remained, and in March, 1919, crossed to Albania for some seven weeks' garrison duty.

Even now, however, the battalion's adventures were not concluded, for on May 8th they again embarked, this time for Egypt, where the end of 1919 found them still on service. In concluding the 1/6th battalion's record, it should be recorded that they were the first Territorial unit to be mentioned, with several Regular battalions, in Lord French's despatches.

### *2nd Line (61st Division).*

The 2/6th Battalion came into existence in September, 1914, a proportion of their officers and other personnel being drawn from the 1/6th Battalion. Their first Commanding Officer was Lieut.-Colonel T. M. Carter, who had previously been second in command of the parent 1/6th Battalion. The 2/6th soon ceased draft-finding duties and were eventually incorporated into the newly-formed 61st Division, with whom they left for France on May 23rd, 1916. Within three weeks the battalion were in the line holding a sector of trench near Neuve Chapelle. They later moved to Laventie, and here on July 19th took part in a big attack upon very strongly-defended enemy positions. The day proved indeed to be a baptism of blood, for losses were very heavy and included no fewer than thirteen officers. After this attack the battalion were taken out of the line for reorganisation, but quickly resumed their place, and during the remainder of 1916 saw considerable service upon various portions of the British front. Early in 1917 a move was made southwards, where the



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61st Division took over a new trench sector from the French near Vermandovillers.

When the enemy began his rearward trek to the Hindenburg Line the division followed him closely and, crossing the River Somme, the 2/6th bore their full share of the new type of open warfare then evolved. In August, at the Third Ypres Battle, the battalion found themselves in close proximity to their parent battalion, the 1/6th. On the 23rd of that month a company of the 2/6th attacked and captured an important German point near Wieltje known as Pond Farm. In early September a move was made to Arras, and the battalion did useful work in the new sector. At the end of November came a further trek to the Havrincourt district, where very heavy fighting was taking place as the result of the big British push towards Cambrai. In the partially successful enemy counter-attack early in December the battalion were heavily engaged, and for two days (December 2nd and 3rd) fought desperately against great odds, making the enemy pay dearly for every inch of ground. When on December 7th reorganisation became possible, only two companies, each of two platoons, could be formed. Christmas was spent out of the line at Chipilly, but the middle of January found the 2/6th again in the trenches, this time north-west of St. Quentin. In the general army reorganisation of the following month, however, the remaining personnel was absorbed into other and stronger units, and after an eventful history of 3½ years the 2/6th battalion ceased to exist.

### *3rd Line.*

In May, 1915, a third battalion of the 6th were raised for draft supplying purposes. This battalion trained successively at Malvern, Cheltenham, Weston-super-Mare and upon Salisbury Plain, and sent frequent drafts to both their 1st and 2nd lines in France. A striking feature of this battalion was the big element of recruits from America. One company alone contained over 200 citizens of the United States who had grown impatient at their country's delay and had come over to England to join up. This is probably the only case on record of an English county battalion with a whole American



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company. A team selected from these men met and defeated upon Malvern College ground a picked Canadian Baseball team from Shorncliffe in the presence of a vast crowd of admiring, though perhaps puzzled, spectators. If the discipline of home training was somewhat irksome to the Americans, it must be recorded that as fighters they were magnificent. Many of them—perhaps the majority—now lie in soldiers' graves in France and Italy, and many decorations for bravery were gained. In September, 1916, the 3/6th Battalion ceased to exist as a separate unit, being merged with the corresponding battalions of the 4th and 5th Gloucesters. The new amalgamated unit (known as the 4th Reserve Battalion) eventually moved to the Northumberland coast, where they continued their work of draft supplying until disbanded in April, 1919.

From August, 1914, until the period when compulsory service were brought in, the recruiting efforts for the three units of the 6th Battalion had been rigorously carried on, not only in Bristol, but by tours into the southern part of the county, and it is estimated that over 7,000 men were raised.

On May 12th, 1919, a colour-party of the 1/6th Battalion were sent from Albania to escort the colours back to the unit, who were still on service. A picturesque ceremony took place on the steps of the Council House, when the Lord Mayor, in presence of Colonel Woodcock and many of the original officers who had been present when the colours were deposited for safe custody, handed back the colours to the representatives of the battalion. A guard of honour under Major Lennard was drawn up, and consisted of warrant officers and N.C.O.'s and men who had served an average of three years on active service with the battalion, and a total of twelve years' average service with their old unit.

### 7TH BATTALION.

The 7th Battalion of the Gloucesters began to form at Tidworth, Salisbury Plain, in August, 1914. Men came in drafts from Horfield Barracks, and the drafts had always grown in numbers by the time they reached Tidworth, as recruits joined en route. When 2,000 men had arrived, half went into camp in an adjoining field, and that was the origin of the



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8th Battalion. In May, 1915, the 7th Gloucesters, commanded by Colonel R. P. Jordan, were preparing to embark for France, when sun helmets were suddenly issued, and on June 19th, 1915, the battalion sailed from Avonmouth for Alexandria, forming one of the units of the 39th Brigade, 13th Division. The battalion did not disembark at Alexandria, but proceeded to the Island of Mudros, and, after waiting for a week, sailed for Gallipoli. They disembarked at Cape Helles and took over the line from the 29th Division, thus beginning a long career of hard fighting in the East, where they covered themselves with glory. They were not kept long at their first task, as they returned to Mudros, whence they re-embarked for Anzac, where they landed on August 5th. They were destined to take part in fighting of the severest character, for three days after landing they and the Wellington Regiment of New Zealanders stormed Chanak Bair at daybreak. All the officers and non-commissioned officers of the 7th Gloucesters who took part in the attack were killed or wounded, and the battalion were almost wiped out. An eye-witness states that in this battle the Gloucesters formed up in two lines on the left of the New Zealanders on Rhododendron Spur. The advance started at 4.15 a.m., and the first line got on to the top of Chanak Bair just as it was getting daylight, and the Dardanelles could be seen. The second line was caught by enfilade machine-gun fire and practically wiped out. The line on top of the hill, which in many places had not time to entrench more than six inches, was continuously attacked by the Turks. But in spite of these attacks and of heavy losses, the position was held until the line was relieved. The battalion then consisted of groups of men being commanded by junior N.C.O.'s or privates the casualties being 363 out of 500. The machine-gun officer (Lieut. Squire) and 29 machine gunners were killed. Lieut. Pickering and Sergeant-Major Hart (who was killed) were conspicuous with the bombers. Sergeant-Major Gough (who also fell) showed conspicuous bravery and took command of the front line. When the remnants of the battalion were relieved at dusk they withdrew to the Chailak Dere.

Brigadier-General F. E. Johnston, commanding the New Zealand Brigade, telegraphed to the officer commanding the



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7th Gloucesters: "Would you please express to your men my appreciation of their gallantry displayed in the taking of Chanak Bair. Colonel Malone telephoned to me before he was killed: 'The Gloucesters are in line with us, and are as staunch as our own men.' I know your losses were heavy, but they were faced unflinchingly, and officers and men acquitted themselves honourably. As a brigade we hope to have such steady comrades with us in future battles."

After the fight on Chanak Bair the battalion were reformed under Colonel Wilkinson and moved to Suvla Bay. In November, 1915, a terrible storm occurred. There was a cloud-burst about seven o'clock in the evening, and the parapets facing up the valley dammed the water which fell. The dam gave way and the trenches became raging torrents, with water up to the top or ground-line. The men, wet through, had to be out in the open until the flood subsided, which it did before daylight, but two feet of silt and water remained in the shallowest part of the trenches. Everything not worn was washed away, leaving everybody wet through, with no change of clothing, no food, no blankets, and up to their knees in water. It was very cold and there was no sun. The second night it snowed, and the third night, when the battalion were still wet through, it froze. The casualties were very heavy. The battalion took part in the evacuation of Suvla Bay, but much to their disappointment were landed again at Cape Helles and took over part of the line until the final evacuation of the Peninsula.

Ordered to Egypt in 1916, they were moved on to Mesopotamia, where they took part in the attempt to relieve General Townshend in Kut. They suffered heavy casualties, Colonel Younghusband and many other officers and men being killed. General Maude then took over command of the force, and the 13th Division were withdrawn to Amara to re-form and train. With the cold weather of 1916-17 General Maude began his operations to capture Kut, and the battalion shared the operations on the right bank of the Tigris, sustaining many casualties. On February 24th 1917, the battalion crossed the Tigris by the pontoon bridge and joined in the commencement of the pursuit of the Turks, which did not cease until Baghdad



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was reached. On February 25th the monitors caught up and passed the battalion, the sailors cheering. "We had all got our tails up," writes an officer of the Gloucesters, "and it was a question of who could go the quickest and collar any of the barges with food which were being pushed up. On the same day we caught up the Turkish troops retreating from Kut, and went for them at once at Imam Mahdi. The Turks went in the night." On March 6th the battalion were advanced guard and stationed outposts from the river to the arch at Ctesiphon, where General Townshend had fought his battle. On March 9th thirty volunteers from one battalion helped to row the 38th Brigade across the River Diala, where the Turks were making a stand; many others had also volunteered. On March 10th the battalion crossed the Diala by a pontoon bridge and at once attacked the Turkish rearguard. On March 11th the battalion marched round Baghdad and bivouacked two miles north of the town. Two days later they entered Baghdad and searched the town for rifles, etc. On March 23rd the Gloucesters began to march up the left bank of the Tigris, getting into touch with the Turks forty miles north of Baghdad, and on March 27th was fought the Battle of the Ruins, which resulted in the Turks being driven still farther north. On April 10th, in conjunction with the 40th Brigade, the Turks, advancing down the Diala, were attacked and defeated, with the result that they withdrew to Jebel Hamrin.

The summer of 1917 was spent either in the outpost line, which ran from the Diala to the Tigris, or in camp on the Tigris, the thermometer at times registering 122° in the shade. The winter of 1917-18 was passed chiefly at Khan Nahwan or in the outpost line. On April 22nd, 1918, the battalion were ordered to join the divisional headquarters as a reserve for the advance on Kirkut, and marched to Deli Abbas. On April 25th they crossed the Jebel Hamrin, and this was the first time they had climbed a hill or seen stones for two years! The battalion arrived at Tuz in time for the battle, but were not used, the Turks putting up a poor fight, in which the British captured 57 officers, 785 men and 10 guns. This was the last fight at which the battalion were present. On May 8th they entered Kirkut—the Turks withdrawing—and occupied the Turkish barracks.



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The 7th Gloucesters formed a part of the brigade ordered to Baku via Persia in July, 1918. The battalion were completely knocked out by influenza in September at Zinjan, to which place they had been diverted to hold the Turks who were threatening to march south and cut off the retreat of our force from Baku. General Allenby's victory in Palestine, however, prevented this. The battalion reached the Caspian Sea on November 15th, their journey from Abu Saida (on the DIALA) being one of 853 miles. They embarked at Enzali, and landed at Baku on November 17th.

### 8TH BATTALION.

The 8th Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment were formed at Tidworth under Colonel J. B. Hobbs in August, 1914, and were at first clad in the extemporised blue serge uniforms issued to Kitchener's Army. In December they moved to billets at Weston-super-Mare, and in April, 1915, went to Bhurtpore Barracks, Tidworth. They were a unit of the 57th Brigade, 19th Division, and sailing from Folkestone on July 18th, landed at Boulogne next day. Two days later they were with the Indian Army Corps behind Neuve Chapelle, and early in August they took over trenches at Richebourg. In September the division attacked in order to divert the enemy while the Battle of Loos was proceeding. There followed for the Gloucesters a period of trench warfare until April, 1916, when they were relieved and were trained in readiness for a great operation, which proved to be the Battle of the Somme. In June they were moved down behind Amiens, and after a month's intensive training were ordered to Albert, where on the morning of July 1st they were in reserve for the main attack. The 34th Division having failed to take La Boisselle, the 19th Division attacked on July 3rd, and after three days' fighting the village was captured. The attack was terribly costly. On July 3rd the Gloucesters lost twenty-three officers and had enormous casualties amongst other ranks. It was here that their famous commanding officer, Colonel Carton de Wiart, won the Victoria Cross. Restored by drafts of fresh officers and men, the Gloucesters were again heavily engaged at Bazentin-le-Petit on July 23rd, and experienced more fierce



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fighting on July 28th. During this month the division sustained no fewer than 6,500 casualties. The division were then relieved and went north to Wytschaete to hold the line "for a rest," as an officer of the Gloucesters puts it. In October the division returned to the Somme and the Stuff Redoubt was taken over, the battalion having, in the vernacular of the army, "a pretty rotten trench 'do'." On November 18th the Gloucesters distinguished themselves in an attack on the village of Grandcourt. In January, 1917, they were in the line at Hebuterne, and afterwards took part in following up the Boche retreat at Serre. Back again at Wytschaete, they were on June 7th attacking in the centre of the 2nd Army Corps, which went forward immediately after the explosion of nineteen enormous mines laid by the British under the Messines Ridge. The Gloucesters went triumphantly through to the final objective, and the 57th Brigade, of which they were a unit, captured the village and wood of Oosttaverne, consolidating the position with complete success. The prisoners taken on this occasion included a German brigadier and his staff. On July 12th, after another battalion had failed to capture Druid's Farm, a strong locality near Junction Buildings, the Gloucesters attacked on a wide front and were completely successful. For the capture of this strong point and for repulsing a counter-attack on July 28th "A" Company (commanded by Captain M. Angell James, M.C.) were awarded the right to wear the Divisional Butterfly on the sleeve of the service dress. On September 20th the division were again allotted a task in another of the advances in the long-drawn-out Third Battle of Ypres. The objective of the main attack was the Passchendaele Ridge, and the division, who were on the extreme right, achieved all the objectives allotted to them, the Gloucesters capturing Belgian Wood. On December 6th the division entrained for the south at very short notice in order to reinforce the Cambrai salient. The Gloucesters took over trenches at Ribecourt, and were in the line for seventy days with only six days' rest.

The battalion won undying glory in the Battle of Bapaume, when, on March 21st, 1918, the Germans began their colossal offensive. A counter-attack to retake Doignies was undertaken by the 57th Brigade (8th Gloucesters and 10th Worcesters)



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in conjunction with a company of tanks. The attack was partially successful, in that, although the village itself was not retaken, the Beaumetz-Doignies road was captured and held, and the enemy attack in this direction temporarily arrested. Subsequently the situation became highly critical. The 57th Brigade put up a most determined fight around Beaumetz before withdrawing, and the fact that the troops of the brigade were able to be withdrawn at all was due to the heroism of the small isolated covering parties who were left out to cover the withdrawal. In two known instances these parties fought to the last man. One was a party of Gloucesters commanded by Captain M. Angell James, M.C., who, wounded and unconscious, was found in a shell-hole by the Germans. He was awarded the Victoria Cross, and at the close of the war returned from captivity in Germany to his home in Bristol. The 8th Gloucesters were the rearguard, and were the last troops to leave Bapaume. They fought an heroic rearguard action right to Hebuterne, where they were relieved by the Australians. Moved north to Wytschaete, when the Huns attacked again on April 10th, the 57th Brigade once more found themselves in the front line in the Battle of the Lys. A few days later they were in the thick of the critical struggle at Neuve Eglise, where the 19th Division were in a most dangerous position, and they continued to participate in this terrible fighting right up to May 18th.

At the end of May Soissons had fallen, Rheims was in danger, and it was doubtful whether even the line of the Marne could be held. A gap had opened in the line between the 13th French Division at Lhery and the 154th near Faverolles. But the 57th Brigade (including the Gloucesters) and the 58th Brigade were thrust into the breach and saved the situation. On June 6th, in new positions, the Gloucesters had an important share in repulsing the renewed German attack. They waited till they could see their foemen's eyes before firing, with the result that the storming column simply vanished, flinging themselves down in the long grass and hiding there till nightfall. When the time of the Allies came, not long after, the 8th Gloucesters had a glorious share in the great advance which brought the war to an end.



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### 12TH BATTALION : "BRISTOL'S OWN."

The first public announcement of the formation of a special Bristol Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment as a contribution to the New Army—or, as it was first called, "Kitchener's Army"—was made on September 4th, 1914. About a week previously the proposal had been privately discussed by the Bristol Citizens' Recruiting Committee, and in Sir Herbert Ashman, Bart., then acting Chairman of the Committee, the idea found an enthusiastic supporter. The approval of the War Office was obtained, and on the date named the conditions of enlistment were issued, together with forms of application for membership, which were obtainable at the Colston Hall, the Stock Exchange, the Commercial Rooms, the Constitutional, Liberal and Clifton Clubs, and at various banks and insurance offices. The notice concerning the formation of the battalion was addressed "To the mercantile and professional young men of the City of Bristol and neighbourhood," and two of the conditions were that the recruits must be between the ages of nineteen and thirty-five and unmarried. The appeal had immediate effect; applications flowed in, and within a week one complete company had been medically examined, attested and enrolled. In less than a fortnight 500 recruits—practically half the battalion—had been enrolled, and although the men were without uniforms or arms, drilling began forthwith in the Colston Hall, which was used as temporary headquarters. On September 14th came the gratifying announcement that Lieut.-Colonel W. E. P. Burges had been appointed by the War Office to command the battalion. Colonel Burges had been doing excellent work in connection with the recruiting campaign in Bristol. His antecedents gave ample assurance that he would be a capable and popular commanding officer. He joined the South Gloucester Militia in 1880, and in 1913 retired from the command of the 3rd Gloucesters, a post which he had held for five years.

The establishment of the 12th Gloucesters, which was at once popularly named "Bristol's Own," was originally to have been 1,100, but on November 30th War Office instructions were received to raise another company of 250 men, and by March 1st, 1915, the total number enlisted for the battalion



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was no fewer than 1,322. A sixth company were eventually raised. Although the majority of the recruits were natives of Bristol, there were many who came from other towns and counties in the western area, including eighty who joined from Weston-super-Mare. The personal quality of the recruits was in every way admirable, and a good many commissions were granted by the War Office to members of "Bristol's Own."

The Exhibition grounds and buildings at Ashton Gate, known as "The White City," were secured by the War Office, and the battalion were housed in the Exhibition buildings, converted by the Royal Engineers and civilian contractors to serve as barracks. During the winter months training proceeded incessantly, marching, rifle and bayonet drill, frequent night operations, sham fights and trench digging being included. In April, 1915, the companies marched out in turn to Chipping Sodbury, where they were billeted and went through a course of trench digging and the construction of field fortifications. On May 24th (Empire Day) the battalion took part with the Bristol Heavy Batteries, the 14th Gloucesters (West of England Bantams), and representatives of all other local military organisations in a parade to the Downs. Great crowds of the citizens lined the route, and "Bristol's Own" created an excellent impression by their soldierly bearing. On May 25th an impressive farewell ceremony took place at the Colston Hall, and on June 23rd the battalion left for Wensleydale, Yorkshire, where they received brigade and divisional training. When late in August they moved to Codford, on Salisbury Plain, they were in fine form and ready for foreign service. At this point Lieut.-Colonel M. Archer Shee, D.S.O., took over the command of the battalion, and proved as popular as his predecessor.

The battalion crossed from Folkestone to Boulogne on November 21st, and then numbered 27 officers and 886 other ranks, not quite the full strength. Moving up towards the front by easy stages via Buigny l'Abbaye, Letoile, Bertangles and La Housson, "Bristol's Own" reached the Somme area early in December. By December 3rd half the battalion were in the village of Suzanne, so close to the lines that rifle and machine-gun bullets frequently whizzed along the streets.





SOMME BATTLE, SEPT. 25TH, 1916.  
BRISTOL TROOPS (12TH GLOUCESTERS) MOVING UP IN SUPPORT.



SECTION OF PIAVE FRONT (MONTELLO RIDGE)  
HELD BY BRISTOL TROOPS IN MARCH, 1918.







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The rest of the battalion remained at Sailly Lorette, situated in the deep ravine through which flows the River Somme. On December 9th the battalion had their first experience of holding on their own responsibility a section of front-line trench, which was taken over by "A" and "B" Companies. The men had seen something of mud before they reached the trenches, but on arriving there they found what real mud meant. The trenches were in a frightful condition through mud and water, and in addition enemy snipers were remarkably active, the battalion sustaining casualties through the accurate marksmanship of the German sharpshooters. Christmas was spent in the trenches, and so was New Year's Day, but shortly afterwards the whole battalion, who had been brigaded with the 5th Division, went out with the other units in the division for a rest. By the end of February, 1916, "Bristol's Own" found themselves in the area behind Arras, and early in March they took over the Redoubt line at Arras from the French. Arras, despite the battles which had already been fought around it, was in pretty fair condition. The Grand Place, or Market Square, subsequently known as "Barbed Wire Square" from the number of entanglements in it, had been heavily bombarded, and the historic and wonderfully carved Hôtel de Ville had been battered beyond recognition. The greater portion of the town, however, was intact, and under it was a wonderful system of caves, cellars and tunnels. The German trenches ran in almost a semicircle at the eastern end of Arras, but despite their proximity it was possible to move about the town somewhat freely after dark, though of course no one was allowed in the streets in the daytime. The battalion remained in this sector for about three months, having a fairly quiet time. Occasionally there would be a little artillery "strafe," or a few mines would be blown, and the ever active trench mortars and snipers kept anybody from vegetating much. The rest periods were spent at Agnes-les-Duisans, down the St. Pol road, but there was just as much mud there as anywhere else.

By July 20th the battalion were back on the Somme battle-front, taking over trenches in Caterpillar Valley. On July 29th the battalion, when in the front line at Longueval village, and immediately in front of Delville Wood (aptly nick-named "Devil's Wood") made their first attack. "B" and "C"



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Companies assaulted the German trenches and gained their objectives in conjunction with the East Surreys. An outstanding incident of the attack was the holding of an advanced post under very difficult conditions by twelve men under Sergeant Harris, and they were all recommended for the part they played. On September 3rd the battalion took part in an attack by the 13th and 15th Corps in conjunction with the French, whose 20th Corps adjoined the British line at the River Somme. The 12th Gloucesters' part in this attack was near Guillemont, a village which proved, owing to well-hidden defences, quite one of the hardest village fortresses to capture on this portion of the battle-front. "A" and "C" Companies provided the first waves of the attack, with "B" and "D" Companies forming the supporting waves. Despite a stubborn resistance, the British advanced steadily and methodically and reached their final objectives, but had to retire to the second objectives owing to our own artillery fire, which had not then lifted. Altogether the operations were cleverly conceived and very capably carried out. Naturally, such a fight was not won without considerable cost in the way of casualties. One officer and 44 other ranks were killed, 6 officers and 225 other ranks wounded, and 48 men were missing. General Rawlinson, then commanding the 4th Army, wired congratulations to all troops in the 5th Division, while the Divisional General also telegraphed to the 12th Gloucesters that "in spite of heavy losses their spirit was as good as ever." and added, "No task is too hard for the 5th Division." Throughout the battalion the utmost bravery and devotion were shown, and it was not surprising that a number of decorations were awarded. The day after the attack was spent in captured German trenches, while the 1st Devons went forward through "Bristol's Own" and re-captured the final objectives. On September 25th the 95th Brigade were again called upon to take part in a 15th Corps attack. This time the 12th were associated with the 2nd King's Own Scottish Borderers in the capture of the important village of Morval, the battalion subsequently taking and holding a line of strong points on the other side of the village. This, the last attack in which "Bristol's Own" were concerned on the Somme, was also highly spoken of, and when at the end of September, on leaving the



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district, a message of congratulation was received by the 5th Division from General Rawlinson, the 12th were proud to know that it included them. That message stated that "the part taken by the 5th Division in the Battle of the Somme reflects the highest credit on the division as a whole. The heavy fighting in Delville Wood and Longueval, the attack and capture of the Falfemont Farm line and Leuze Wood, and finally the storming of Morval village are feats of arms seldom equalled in the annals of the British Army."

After a turn in the Givenchy sector, the battalion took over the front line in the Cuinchy sector, where they beat off a determined night raid by the enemy. It was with genuine regret that on February 25th the battalion said good-bye to Lieut.-Colonel Archer Shee, who then relinquished the command of the unit, being succeeded by Lieut.-Colonel R. I. Rawson. Early in March conditions in the line again assumed a certain amount of activity, and on the morning of the 5th "A" Company carried out a very successful raid. They were in the enemy trenches for twenty minutes, during which time they raised pandemonium. They took two prisoners, killed six sentries, and blew in all the dug-outs, those operations, it was estimated, accounting for the deaths of fifty other Germans.

On May 4th the battalion relieved the 1st Canadian Battalion in trenches east of Fresnoy, which had been captured only the day before. The captured village and its defences had not yet been consolidated, and the enemy seemed to regard it as a position of the highest importance and one which they were determined to recapture. The Gloucesters were heavily shelled, and bombed by aeroplanes, and on May 8th the enemy made a fierce attack. The enemy opened an exceptionally heavy barrage on the lines and battalion headquarters at 3.45 a.m., when there was a thick mist which made observation difficult even at fifty yards' distance. By four o'clock there was no doubt about the matter; the enemy were attacking in force. It was afterwards learned that they had brought up the 5th Bavarian Division with the object of re-capturing the village and its defences. The preliminary barrages had taken heavy toll of the Gloucesters even before the German infantry came on; in fact, "A" Company had practically ceased to exist before the infantry attack began, and the brunt of the attack



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was borne by "B" Company. Captain Parr, of that company, was last seen surrounded by the enemy and fighting desperately with a shovel. The remnants of these two companies stood their ground valiantly, and though surrounded, fought to the last. Some got back, some were captured, but many fell. One Lewis gun crew who survived claimed to have wiped out four waves of German infantry, finishing up by firing into the oncoming masses at fifty yards. Without very efficient artillery support, which it was impossible to get at the time, the position was hopeless for "Bristol's Own," and there was no alternative but to retire a few hundred yards and give the enemy possession of the village again. Counter-attacks were made in the earlier stages of the action by "B" and "D" Companies and later by the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and the remnants of "C" Company, who also suffered heavily in the later stages of the attack. The first line was recovered, but could not be held owing to the enemy having possession of the high ground on both flanks. Later "D" Company were sent forward to establish a line and join up with the Canadians on the left and the East Surreys on the right, which they did successfully. No body of men could have fought better or showed more bravery against heavy odds than did the men of "Bristol's Own," and it was sheer weight of numbers and continued heavy artillery fire that eventually forced them back the few hundred yards they went. During that day alone the casualties amounted to 13 officers and 283 men, while there had been a heavy toll exacted by the accurate artillery fire of the enemy on the previous days. During June Colonel Rawson went to the 95th Brigade Headquarters, and Major Colt, afterwards promoted Lieut.-Colonel, became the officer commanding the 12th Gloucesters, with whom he had served throughout, beginning as Captain in command of "E" Company.

By the beginning of October the 12th were once again "in the thick of it," being ordered to the Ypres salient, where the Passchendaele Battle was still violently proceeding. During their eleven days in the salient "Bristol's Own" had 4 officers and 59 men killed, 6 officers and 177 men wounded, and 4 officers and 91 men gassed.

In December the battalion were ordered to the Italian front, and in January, 1918, the 5th Division moved up to



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reserve positions, from which "Bristol's Own" relieved the 215th Italian Infantry Regiment. After this they were soon in action on the River Piave sector, and the 12th very soon let the enemy know they were there, for in February they began frequent raids, wading through the icy cold river to harass the enemy.

Then came the great German offensive, and the 5th Division returned to France, where on April 12th "Bristol's Own" were in support on the La Motte-Merville road near the Forest of Nieppe. The enemy were determined to get to Hazebrouck, and on the second day after their arrival in the district "B" Company of the 12th Gloucesters were called upon to double over several yards of open country to reinforce other troops who were being heavily attacked. The attacks were repulsed, but "B" Company suffered severely, having 16 killed, 56 wounded and 2 missing. Two days later the enemy again attacked in dense formation, but only to be repulsed, machine-guns doing terrible execution in their ranks. At the end of April "Bristol's Own" captured the hamlet of Le Vert Bois, for which feat they received the praise of General Haking, who wrote: "It was a very creditable performance, and will greatly improve our situation." The General commanding the 5th Division wired: "The determination with which the Gloucesters fought their way into Vert Bois Farm is to be specially commended." On June 28th the battalion captured Caudescure, went as far forward as Le Cornet Perdu, and thence sent out patrols still farther into the German lines to destroy the bridges across the Plate Becque. The whole attack was carried out with clockwork precision, and the prisoners taken were 1 officer and 440 other ranks. Seven machine-guns and a quantity of other material were also captured by the Gloucesters, whose casualties totalled 150. Artillery fire after this attack was very heavy, however, and on the following day, when "Bristol's Own" remained in the trenches, they had no fewer than 100 casualties from shell-fire alone. During August came the start of the great offensive by the Allies, which was to cause the final collapse of the enemy, and for the opening of this the 12th Gloucesters were moved down from the Merville area to the River Ancre front again, where they were to take part in their final battle. The Gloucesters went into action at the beginning of the offensive just north of the River Azure,



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near the scenes of some of their old encounters, and, with the aid of tanks captured the Arras-Albert railway near Achiet-le-Grand. They afterwards pushed forward, despite stiff opposition and heavy casualties, and before the end of August they were again in action near Beugny. In the ten days from the 21st to the 31st of the month their captures included 9 officers and 300 other ranks, a howitzer, two field-guns and forty machine-guns. The last attack in which "Bristol's Own" took part was on Beaucamp and Highland Ridges, north-east of Gouzeaucourt. On October 5th orders to commence disbanding were received, and next day a final ceremonial Church Parade took place. Most of the men of the battalion were transferred to other units of the 5th Division, and thus quietly ended the glorious career of the unit.

### 14TH BATTALION.

During the first stages of the Great War many would-be recruits were "turned down" on account of their lack of inches. When it became evident that a vast army must be formed, steps were taken in several districts to form special units of small but fit men. There was scope for such work in Bristol, and it was taken up by the Bristol Citizens' Recruiting Committee, who in May, 1915, began the formation of the 14th (Service) Battalion Gloucester Regiment (the West of England Bantams). The majority of the recruits were from the Bristol district; there were some from other western areas, and some from the Birmingham neighbourhood. Most of the officers were Bristol men, or had local connections, and the original commanding officer of the battalion was Major John Carr, the Recruiting Officer for Bristol. The battalion quickly grew up to regulation strength, and took up quarters with the 12th Gloucesters and the two Bristol Heavy Batteries at "The White City," Ashton Gate, where they underwent four months' strenuous training. They were a remarkably intelligent and smart lot of men, and they rapidly picked up the rudiments of military discipline and science. The citizens of Bristol took a great interest in the battalion, who were always sure of a hearty reception when they marched through the streets. The battalion left the city in August, and at Chiseldon,



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Wiltshire, were handed over by Major Carr to the 35th Division—the Bantam Division. There they continued their strenuous preparations for the field, until in January, 1916, the whole division were regarded as fit for active service; indeed, the Bristol Bantams were in action in France within about nine months of their formation. It was on January 31st, 1916, that the battalion embarked at Folkestone for the front. On February 20th they marched to La Pannerie and became reserve troops to the 38th Division. After a week in support they moved up to Le Touret (on the Bethune-Neuve Chapelle road), where they were attached to the 115th Infantry Brigade for instruction in trench warfare. Here, just north of Festubert, they had their first experience of front-line trenches. The first casualties were sustained on March 2nd, when two men were killed, being buried in the British cemetery at Le Touret. Other casualties soon followed, and in addition the climatic conditions were very bad, the weather being bitterly cold, with frequent falls of snow and sleet, while the mud was terrible. At the end of March the Bantams were ordered to Estaires and Laventie, and on March 30th they relieved the 15th Cheshires in the Fauquissart sector, just north of Neuve Chapelle. On June 2nd a German bomb landed in the midst of a little group consisting of Lieut. H. C. Kinred and five men. Before the bomb had time to explode Lieut. Kinred threw himself flat on top of it. A steel waistcoat that he was wearing saved him from serious injury, but his prompt gallantry saved the five men from wounds and possibly from death, and he richly deserved the Military Cross which was awarded to him. A week later the Bantams made a very successful raid on the German trenches, capturing a machine-gun, bombing dug-outs, killing about thirty Germans, and finally driving the enemy back under our barrage, where their casualties must have been heavy. Unhappily, Colonel Roberts, officer commanding the battalion, was killed, and Captain H. A. Butt, in charge of the raiders, also lost his life. 2nd-Lieut. Menendey crawled eighty yards in front of our trenches and discovered Captain Butt dangerously wounded, as he thought, in a shell hole. Despite heavy machine-gun fire, Captain Butt was brought in, only to find that life was extinct. Major A. H. Radice was given command of the battalion.



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The battalion took a valiant part in the Battle of the Somme, and on July 18th and 19th were in the front-line in Trones Wood, which was a corpse-strewn charnel-house. Night and day both sides conducted increasing bombardments with guns of every calibre; there was no possibility of rest, and the whole wood was drenched with gas, which the enemy sent over in large quantities in gas-shell barrages. Though the battalion sustained heavy casualties, they behaved exceedingly bravely in this their first experience of a big battle. For some weeks the battalion fought in the same neighbourhood, and a draft of two hundred men was very welcome, as the unit had become much below strength. On August 14th the battalion took over a front-line position opposite a German "strong point," where they repulsed two early-morning raids with heavy losses to the attacking Germans. On September 16th the Bantams went into front-line trenches just on the edge of the town of Arras, and during the whole of their stay experienced heavy rain, which damaged the trenches and added the discomforts of mud and water to the zealous attentions of the enemy with grenades and trench mortars. Early in October the battalion were in trenches which were wrecked by the enemy with heavy trench mortar projectiles. The re-organisation of the Bantams as a battalion of infantry of the line took place in January, 1917, 121 N.C.O.'s and men leaving the battalion on New Year's Day. Early in February they received a draft of nearly 400 normal-sized men. The final re-organisation of the battalion was accomplished at Moncheaux, near Frevent, whence a further 300 men were sent to the base. Subsequently the battalion participated in the last extension of the British line in France, relieving the French at Chilly, south of Chaumes, in the Caix sector, where they found the trenches in very bad condition. Heavy rain had prevailed for some weeks, and the Gloucesters found themselves wading about in mud and water which reached, in some cases, above the knees. In this sector the enemy were very active and determined, and the Gloucesters were severely bombarded both with shells and aerial torpedoes. Enemy raiders entered the front-line, but were driven back before they could do much damage. Relieved at the end of February, on March 16th the battalion returned to the line at Lihons, about a mile from



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Chaulnes. Rumours of an impending evacuation by the Germans on this front had become insistent, and the Gloucesters pushed out very energetic patrols at night to ascertain whether the enemy front was still held. On the second night the patrols reported that the enemy front line was unoccupied; other strong patrols were consequently pushed well forward, and during the 18th the battalion steadily advanced. On the 19th they were relieved and returned to Lihons, then far enough back to be a rest area. They were not allowed to rest, however, but were immediately turned on to the work of road-making. On April 16th the Gloucesters took over an outpost line at Gricourt and did good work there. In May they were in our new front line, and were next in action in June on the Cambrai front. They were in hand-to-hand fighting at Gauche Woods in July. At 4 o'clock on the morning of August 19th the 105th Brigade, of which the 14th Gloucesters were a unit, attacked and captured a small eminence known as "The Knoll" in front of the village of L'Empire. That night the whole of the battalion were engaged in wiring the new positions, dangerous work which they accomplished quickly and efficiently. Two days later the enemy made a determined effort to recapture "The Knoll," attacking with large forces at three separate points and using flame-throwers. They were repulsed everywhere, and the ground remained in our hands. The Gloucesters fought splendidly in meeting this counter-attack and did a great deal to nullify the Germans' desperate effort.

Early in October the Gloucesters moved north to the Ypres sector, and ultimately they took up a position in the Houlthoult Forest, which was a horrible tangle of morass, mangled trees and shell-holes, with splintered planks heaped and twisted amongst the trenches, where the Boche had made huts for rest billets when his line was farther forward. It was a nightmare forest, and the shell-holes, filled with glutinous mud, added to the horrors of the locality. On October 22nd, the day after they reached the forest, the Gloucesters took part in an attack in which they covered themselves with glory. It was in the height of the Passchendaele Battle, which marked the highest point reached during the war in the intensity of artillery fire. Both sides massed almost inconceivable numbers of guns,



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and the casualties, ultimately published, show it to have been one of the most deadly actions of the whole war. Despite the opposition from "pill-boxes"—concrete forts which the Germans deemed impregnable—the Gloucesters carried their first objectives very quickly. By 7.20 a.m. the final objectives had been reached, and word was sent back that the whole of the positions were in our hands. One of the companies were engaged in carrying up ammunition and other necessary supplies, and they did this important work very effectively, though in common with all the other companies they suffered heavy casualties. One shell alone killed eighteen men. Captain Russell took charge of the battalion during the attack, and his conduct of the operations and his personal bravery cannot be too highly commended. The ground won had to be consolidated under heavy shell-fire, and touch had to be gained through the labyrinth of trees with the battalion on the right. It was not until 1 p.m. on the following day that contact with the next battalion was fully established. Battalion headquarters, then in a "pill-box," were heavily shelled that day, the enemy getting two direct hits upon it. A stubborn counter-attack by the enemy was repulsed with heavy loss to the Germans. The 14th Gloucesters were relieved on the night of the 23rd, after two of the most strenuous days in their history. After their first awful experiences in the Houlthoult Forest, the battalion had a week's rest just behind the lines, a rest which they badly needed, for a more nerve-racking and physically exhausting experience than they had undergone could not be imagined. Even in rest, however, they were by no means left in peace, for perhaps in no other battle of the war were long-range shelling and aeroplane bombing carried on to such an extent as in the Passchendaele Battle.

On October 30th the Gloucesters were again called upon to take over a portion of the front line in Houlthoult Forest, and after further terrible hardships and dangers were relieved on November 2nd. With the opening of December the battalion were once again in action in the Ypres area, taking over trenches in the Langemarck sector. The Canadians had recently captured Passchendaele, and though there was at this period no attack in which the 14th Gloucesters took part, there was plenty of work to be done in the positions occupied.



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The enemy were constantly counter-attacking with the object of removing the threat to their northern flank, artillery fire was still severe, and the whole line in this area continued to seethe with activity. After their turn in the trenches, the battalion were once again ordered to School Camp, near Ypres. Christmas, 1917, was fortunately spent out of the line, and the Gloucesters contrived to have quite a good time, despite the extremely severe weather. For the Christmas festivities there were sports and competitions of all sorts, in which the battalion won second prize in the cross-country run, showing that they were good in sport as well as efficient in the stern tasks of war. Early in the new year the battalion moved up to the canal bank just north of Ypres, and then went into action on the left sector on this front. They remained in this area until early in February, when they carried out successfully their final exploit. The battalion had begun their fighting career in France with an effective raid, and were to close their history with another exploit of similar character. This was a raid on the buildings known as the Grand Farm, Bougalores. It took place on February 4th, and was conducted by 2nd-Lieut. E. J. Rundle, D.C.M., and 2nd-Lieut. E. W. Denby, with thirty-eight men. They cut the enemy wire and found the farm to consist of three buildings, concreted for defensive purposes. They carried out the objects of the raid quickly and efficiently, and returned to their line with slight casualties and without a single member of the raiding party being killed. A report by Brigadier-General Marinden said: "The leading of the raid and the behaviour of all ranks appear to have been excellent." He also sent a congratulatory message to the battalion, which read: "Well done, Gloucesters! Please convey my congratulations to all ranks on the excellent organisation and clean carrying out of the raid." The Divisional Commander wired that the Corps Commander wished him to convey to Brigadier-General Marinden and all ranks his congratulations on the successful raid carried out the previous night. He added: "I am particularly glad that the 14th Gloucesters has had the opportunity of finishing its career as it began in France, by carrying out a successful raid."

The 14th Gloucesters were disbanded on February 11th, 1918, in order to provide personnel for other units. Twelve



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officers and 250 men and the battalion transport went to the 13th Gloucesters, and the remainder of the battalion entrained at Proven and went to Bollireele, whence they marched to the surplus wing of the 2nd Corps Reinforcement Camp. It was with genuine regret that the officers and men carried out the disbandment of the battalion, which had played so excellent a part in the greatest of all wars.

### 3RD SOUTH MIDLAND FIELD AMBULANCE.

In common with the other units of the South Midland Division, the 3rd South Midland Field Ambulance were recalled from camp and instructed to stand by during those eventful days preceding August 4th, 1914. The brief but fateful telegram "Mobilise" reached the headquarters of the unit about 7 p.m. on that day, and from that hour onwards all was bustle and excitement in carrying out the work of mobilisation, and they were able to march off from their headquarters at Colston Fort to entrain at Pylle Hill Station in accordance with scheduled time. Their temporary war station was Swindon, where the concentration of the division was effected. After remaining there for a few days, the division entrained for Leighton-Buzzard, whence they proceeded by route march via Dunstable, Hitchin, Ware, Waltham Abbey and North Weald Bassett to the village of Margaretting, near Chelmsford, the division being concentrated in and around that town. The field ambulance were billeted at Margaretting until December 8th, when orders were received for a move to close billets in the town of Chelmsford, and there the unit remained until the end of March, when along with the division the field ambulance proceeded for service in France.

Apart from the training of the unit itself and the general medical and surgical care of the brigade to which this field ambulance was attached, the most important work which the unit had to do before proceeding to France was to deal with the serious outbreak of cerebro-spinal meningitis which, threatening the division in the first week of February, 1915, quickly assumed a serious character. To the 3rd Field Ambulance was given the important duty of combatting this appallingly fatal disease, to which soldiers segregated in camps, barracks, etc., are peculiarly liable. In conjunction



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with the Local Board of Health the Military Authorities leased a house in close proximity to the headquarters of the ambulance, where was set up a hospital for the reception of all cases of cerebro-spinal fever, whether occurring amongst the civil population or amongst the troops of the division. The provision of an adequate staff of trained nurses and the furnishing of the hospital was undertaken by the civil authorities, while the duty of treating the patients devolved upon the officers and men of the 3rd Field Ambulance. The division were fortunate in having in this field ambulance the services of several highly-skilled specialists, who were able to deal with the outbreak by the most scientific and the most recent therapeutic methods.

### *1st Line (48th Division).*

When an outbreak of this disease occurs amongst troops the fatality is invariably high and the extent of its ravages considerable, but so excellent was the result of the stringent measures taken and the skill manifested by the various officers concerned in the treatment of the cases, that the epidemic was kept within the most reasonable control, and the mortality remarkably low. It was at one time feared that the seriousness of this outbreak would prevent the division proceeding abroad, but the epidemic was controlled in time to enable the whole division to proceed to France, and on March 28th, 1915, the 3rd Field Ambulance (Lieut.-Colonel James Young in command) entrained at Chelmsford en route for that country, via Southampton and Havre. Havre was reached in the early morning of March 30th, and on the 7th April the unit proceeded to Armentières, where they were distributed amongst the field ambulances of the 4th Division, which it was intended that the South Midland, now the 48th Division of the British Expeditionary Force, should replace in the front line, and from which they obtained the necessary information with regard to the dressing stations and regimental aid-posts of the division.

April 15th, 1915, was perhaps the greatest land-mark in the history of the field ambulance, for on that day they took over from the 10th Field Ambulance (4th Division), and entered into the actual duties for which during all their previous years they had been training, viz. those of a field ambulance in the very front line in war. The headquarters of the ambulance



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were at Romarin, a hamlet some two miles from Ploegsteert (the well-known "Plugstreet"), in which village was their advanced dressing station.

The later days of April and the early days of March were made memorable to the 3rd South Midland Field Ambulance by the dastardly action of the Huns at the Second Battle of Ypres, for though this unit took no part in the fight, upon it devolved in a large measure the preparation of the first form of gas masks used to counteract the deleterious effects of the poison gas then used by the Germans for the first time.

One of the most interesting features of their stay in the neighbourhood of "Plugstreet" was that one of the regimental aid-posts from which the field ambulance collected the wounded was at Plus Douve Farm, where Captain Bruce Bairnsfather first created "Old Bill," and the walls of which were adorned with sketches by that original and now famous artist. It was to the advanced dressing station of the 3rd Field Ambulance, too, that the body of that great sportsman, Lieutenant Poulton Palmer, was carried when the career of England's famous Rugby international was ended by a stray Hun bullet. This dressing station—a convent in days of peace—had later to be abandoned, the severity of the shelling rendering it unsuitable for the reception of the wounded. The unit remained in the neighbourhood of "Plugstreet" until June 25th, when they were relieved by a field ambulance of the 12th Division, and moved south via Bailleul, Vieux Berquin, Lillers, Merville, St. Venant, Ham-en-Artois to Auchel. At Auchel the headquarters of the unit was the Hôtel de Ville, where on July 3rd, 1916, they received a visit of inspection from Sir Douglas Haig, then General Officer Commanding 1st Army, who was immediately interested on discovering that they were a Bristol unit. In conversation with the Commanding Officer, Sir Douglas spoke with affection of his old school, Clifton College, and of the happy years he had spent there. The unit remained at Auchel until July 20th, when they marched to Lillers, where they entrained for Mondicourt via Doullens. At Mondicourt they detrained and marched to Coigneux, where they bivouacked until the 28th, when they moved to Vauchelles-les-Authie. In the meanwhile they had established advanced dressing stations at the villages of Hebuterne and



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Sailly-aux-Bois, the former a much-shelled and ruined village entirely devoid of civil population, facing the German lines near Gommecourt. At Vauchelles the headquarters of the unit occupied the Château Vauchelles and the mairie and village school, and here the field ambulance ran the divisional rest station in addition to the advanced dressing stations at Hebuterne and Sailly-aux-Bois.

During this period the sector of the line occupied by the 48th Division was comparatively quiet save for occasional raids. The battle casualties were comparatively low, and much attention was given to the maintenance of the general health and comfort of the troops. Special attention was devoted to sanitation and water supply, and it is a striking commentary on the care which was exercised in this direction and on the value of inoculation (to which every man was subjected) that whilst at this period enteric fever was very prevalent and fatal amongst the French civil population inhabiting the Authie Valley not a single fatality occurred amongst the British troops. Those who remember the high mortality from this disease in the South African War will appreciate the significance of the comparison. Divisional baths and laundries were also at this time established at Sailly-aux-Bois, where later all men of the battalions out of the trenches were given the opportunity of a bath and the luxury of clean linen during their period in rest billets.

During their stay at Vauchelles in the autumn of 1915 the unit were able to afford much valuable assistance to the French population in and around the village in the gathering of the crops. The field ambulance supplied horses, wagons and men, and during the autumn and winter months assistance was given to the extent of 1,400 hours' work on the part of the horses, and 4,859 hours on the part of the men, a very valuable contribution to the French agriculturists of that district.

The unit remained at Vauchelles until the middle of February, 1916, when a move was made to Souastre and Fonquevillers.

At this time the command of the unit was taken over by Major T. A. Green, Colonel Young having been promoted Assistant Director of Medical Services to the 61st Division. On March 11th orders were received to move the headquarters of the unit to Couin Château, but "C" Section, under Captain



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Scott Williamson, remained at Souastre. The headquarters were not long at the Château, as owing to the re-arrangement of the front line it was required for the 48th Divisional Headquarters, and on March 26th, in a violent snowstorm, the ambulance was transferred to huts in a paddock fronting on the Couin-Souastre Road. The next three months were spent in building this main dressing station and the new advanced dressing station at Fonquevillers and dealing with such sick and wounded as were usual in trench warfare. On May 1st "C" Section took over the advanced dressing station at Hebuterne. At the beginning of June it was necessary to commence building a new advanced dressing station in this village, and by hard work this was more or less completed by the middle of the month. Meanwhile the main dressing station had been finished, and provided accommodation for 400 lying cases and over 500 sitting cases, including a small officers' hospital, all in huts or tents. A scheme of evacuating wounded from the front line, with a collecting post behind Sailly, was drawn up, and everything was ready for the general attack of July 1st. For this attack the 48th Division were in 8th Corps Reserve. Evacuations from the front line were carried out smoothly, but were not very numerous, and in consequence it was found possible to render assistance to the main dressing station of the 56th Division, which was situated close at hand and which was severely taxed. On July 15th the unit moved with the division to the Ovillers-La Boisselle front, and ultimately took over the dressing station for slightly wounded at Vadencourt, and an advanced dressing station in Albert, with a collecting post on the Bapaume Road. There was plenty of work here, as fighting around Pozières and Mouquet Farm was almost continuous, and several bearers were gassed and wounded. After stays at Louvencourt, on the Auchonvillers-Mailly front, and a return to Hebuterne and Fonquevillers, the division moved south to Martinpuich and Le Sars.

Here the ambulance took over the 3rd Corps Rest Station at Becourt Hill, located in marquees, with nominal accommodation for 1,000 patients. The site proved unsatisfactory for a winter camp, particularly as the weather was extremely severe, mud, rain, snow and sleet having to be contended with most of the time. The bearers were sent up the line in batches



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to assist in the evacuation of the sick and wounded. It was a most fatiguing experience, and no regret was felt when at the beginning of January, 1917, the division moved back to rest near Abbeville.

In February the division relieved a French infantry division south of the Somme and in front of Peronne, and the ambulance, with its headquarters at Eclusier and advanced dressing station at Flaucourt, took over the collecting of the sick and wounded from the front line. A large main dressing station, chiefly in huts, was built by the unit at Eclusier, and the work there was very strenuous, for there was a constant stream of wounded to be treated, also a large number of cases of trench feet.

When the great German retreat took place in March the unit were in the "follow-up," successively moving forward to Doingt, Tincourt, Templeaux-la-Fosse, and Villers-Faucon. Soup kitchens, supervised by Royal Army Medical Corps orderlies, were opened at suitable sites for the use of working parties and troops marching in and out of the line, and the evacuation of sick and wounded to the main dressing station at Peronne had to be organised. The number of wounded dealt with during these operations was not so large as on many other occasions, but the percentage of serious cases was high. For instance, out of between 300 and 400 cases who passed through the ambulance on April 24th and 25th, when Guillemont Farm, in front of the Hindenburg line, was captured, fifty per cent. were stretcher cases.

After building a Divisional Rest Station on the Bapaume-Beaulencourt Road, the division proceeded in July to Belgium, and encamping on the Poperinghe-Elverdinghe Road, assisted in the heavy work which followed the attack on July 31st. Heavy rain brought the operations to a comparative standstill, but they were continued in August in spite of the unfavourable weather. The bearers in the front line had a particularly hard time, and during the month six members of the unit were killed and 27 wounded. On October 10th the division left the Ypres salient, and relieved the 2nd Canadian Division in the line near Lens.

The next move was to Italy, which was reached on November 29th, 1917. The unit were stationed successively at Stroppari in the area east of the River Brenta, and in the line on the



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Montello. Subsequently the 48th Division went into billets north-west of Vicenza, where they were equipped and trained for service in the mountains. In the latter part of April, 1918, the division took over the Granezza sector of the British front on the Asiago Plateau and the field ambulance opened a dressing station at S. Giorgio di Perlina in the foot-hills. Later they opened a large convalescent camp in bivouacs at Grumolo, but the rain rendered it untenable and a more suitable site was found at Tavola. Early on the morning of June 15th the Austrians anticipated the Allied offensive and attacked all along the line from the Astico to the sea. During the forenoon the Assistant Director of Medical Services sent orders for the despatch of every available bearer to the assistance of the 1/2nd South Midland Field Ambulance, who were heavily pressed in their work of collecting wounded. These were despatched immediately, and by strenuous efforts the new camp was made ready for 500 cases by the early afternoon. On July 20th the field ambulance took over the main dressing station at Tattenham Corner, Granezza, and the advanced dressing stations at Pria del Aqua and Capitello. They fulfilled expeditiously the formidable task of shifting the main dressing station to a more suitable site and making other extensive changes. In place of the unsatisfactory dressing station at Pria del Aqua a castellated structure, proof against anything but the heaviest shells, was erected on a new site and was officially named "Bristol Castle." The unit performed valuable services while the victorious advance of the British was progressing, and on November 5th, after the Armistice with Austria was signed, established its headquarters in an Austrian hospital in the Val d'Assa. In February, 1919, the 1/3rd South Midland Field Ambulance were selected as the medical unit of the Army of Occupation in Italy (forward area), and with an almost new and increased personnel established themselves at the end of March at Dueville. Two detention hospitals of fifty beds, one at Imst and the other at Fiume, at both of which places British troops were stationed, were under the administration of the ambulance. At the end of April the Army of Occupation in Italy was in the main sent to Egypt, but as the field ambulance was not required there, it was reduced to cadre strength, and left Italy for England on May 13th, 1919.



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### *2nd Line (61st Division).*

The 2/3rd South Midland Field Ambulance came into official existence on November 1st, 1914, when Major B. M. H. Rogers took over command of the recruits who had been enlisted during the previous months. The unit was intended to supply drafts for the first line and also to form an entirely new field ambulance for the second line of the Territorial Force which had been decided upon, but at first it contained a certain number of men brought back from the first line who for various reasons had not been kept in Essex.

Early in February, 1915, orders were received to entrain for Northampton, and for three months the unit remained there, being billeted in streets near the Race Course. A reception hospital was established for the troops, the work being shared by all three of the divisional field ambulances, and arrangements were made with the local hospital authorities by which the men were able to undertake ward duties in the Infirmary. The division was inspected by Sir Ian Hamilton in the Park.

In April of the same year the unit was moved to Danbury, near Chelmsford, where it was quartered in billets in farms and houses near the village. Here again a reception hospital was opened for the troops with which the field ambulance was brigaded.

In June the unit was ordered to go under canvas with the South Midland Infantry Brigade at Epping, where a camp hospital was opened, and the officer commanding had the use of a small Red Cross Hospital which had been opened in the town. At the end of six weeks the unit marched back to Chelmsford and took over the huts in the grounds of "Oaklands," where a hospital had been in existence since 1914. This hospital was staffed by the men and the professional work was done by a civilian doctor, an excellent arrangement, as it gave the officers time to take part in the training of the men, and they were not detailed for duty to other units as had happened till now. Whilst here the unit with the division was inspected by Lord Kitchener in Highland Park. In October came another move, this time to Brentwood, whither



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the unit marched on October 20th. The men were quartered in an empty Industrial School, which made in many ways a good barrack, though the roof might have been a little more sound. The Congregational School was converted into a hospital of thirty beds and staffed by both officers and men. The last move before going overseas was to Perham Down, Salisbury Plain, which was carried out in February, 1916. In the early part of May the division was inspected by His Majesty the King on Bulford Field preparatory to going overseas. When the unit left for foreign service it was very efficient and well-trained. Every detail of the work it would be expected to carry out in France had been gone over time after time, so that every man had had the whole system and duties of a field ambulance ground into him, and could be relied on to perform any of them when called on.

The unit proceeded to France on May 25th, 1916, and on June 3rd "A" Section were detailed for the Mesplaux-Neuve Chapelle area, where, round about Festubert, they made their first trip to the trenches. During the Battle of the Somme the unit was running aid-posts at Richebourg, St. Vaast and Green Barn. On July 19th they were very busy, 950 casualties passing through their hands in eight hours, but thanks to the excellent organisation there was no hitch. Line work was continued up to October 26th, and two days later the unit began their trek for the Somme. On November 11th the majority of the ambulance were hurried to the line near Bapaume as bearers, and had a really rough time of it. After almost continuous activity in many parts of the line the unit took over, on August 16th, 1917, a field ambulance—Mill Farm—in the Ypres sector, and at this point their chronicler records "front line work again, as usual." Two hundred infantry were attached as bearers, and on one occasion 800 cases were dealt with in forty-eight hours. On September 10th forty-seven men of the ambulance were gassed. A little later the unit moved to the Arras district, and continued front line work in that and various other areas. In the strenuous course of their career they opened and ran numerous dressing stations and hospitals. Ultimately they provided the personnel of a main dressing station for sick at Cambrai. The cadre returned to England for demobilization in June, 1919.



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### ROYAL AIR FORCE.

During the summer of 1915 machines from the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company were tested and despatched overseas by the Royal Air Force, and this continued until May, 1917. In October, 1915, a Training Squadron was formed at Filton, trained pilots were equipped with machines and proceeded overseas some months later. The aerodrome was then enlarged to hold two Training Squadrons, who continued training pilots and forming complete squadrons until May, 1917. During this period five or six squadrons passed through Filton. In May, 1917, Filton ceased to be a Training Station, and an Aircraft Acceptance Park (No. 5) was formed to erect, test, and despatch machines for overseas from Contractors' works—those of the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company, Filton, the Gloucester Aircraft Company, Cheltenham, the Westland Aeroplane Works, Yeovil, and the National Aircraft Factory, Liverpool. The majority of machines, other than those used for training pilots at home stations, were despatched direct overseas, and in the summer of 1918 the output of machines from Filton reached 200 a month, by far the greatest proportion of these being the Bristol Fighter Biplane fitted with Rolls-Royce Engine, which did such excellent service overseas, and probably accounted for more Hun machines than any other type of British aeroplane.

In Bristol was formed the No. 6 School of Aeronautics, which used part of the University buildings and of the Western College. Large numbers of cadets, who lived in various houses in Tyndall's Park, were trained to obtain their commissions in the flying, technical, or administrative branches of the Royal Air Force.

### NATIONAL RESERVE.

Of much value was the service rendered by the National Reserve, whose headquarters were in May, 1914, moved from Orchard Street to No. 7 College Green. The formation of a Bristol Branch of the Veteran Reserve (the designation was changed to National Reserve in 1911) was the outcome of a meeting called at the Guildhall by the Lord Mayor (the late Alderman C. A. Hayes, J.P.) on October 26th, 1910.



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Lieut.-Colonel Rintoul was appointed commanding officer, and four companies were formed, one from each of the Parliamentary Divisions of the city. Later a naval company was formed.

On the resignation early in 1912 of Lieut.-Colonel Rintoul Colonel H. Cary Batten took over the command of the unit. On February 1st, 1912, the number of enrolments stood at 27 officers and 287 rank and file, but Colonel Cary Batten threw such energy into the movement, that before the end of the year the force was a thousand strong. On Saturday, February 15th, 1913, the unit was inspected at the 4th Gloucesters' Drill Hall by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, V.C., K.C.B., Colonel-in-Chief of the National Reserve.

Just before August, 1914, the number of enrolled members exceeded 3,000, and during the early days of the month more than 1,000 officers and men were sworn in. The bulk of the heavy work entailed fell upon Colonel C. Y. Crommelin. More than 3,000 of the members (practically all the Class 1 and Class 2 men) joined the Forces or Guard Companies, and some Class 3 men who were able to pass the medical test also joined the latter.

### THE VOLUNTEERS.

The Volunteer movement in Bristol, as throughout the country, took its rise from a natural desire on the part of the men who were unable to join the army to prepare themselves for any eventuality should the prolongation of the war cause a demand for their services. Thus in the autumn of 1914 there sprang into existence a number of Training Clubs, and for many months the members devoted themselves assiduously to drilling and marksmanship. Continuous efforts were made by the promoters of these organisations to secure recognition by the War Office, but for a considerable period those efforts were of no avail. The Central Association of Volunteer Corps, with headquarters in London, was approved by the Government and authorised to control the movement, but the conditions of affiliation were so unpalatable and the rulings appeared so arbitrary, that much of the true "Volunteer" spirit was chilled, and as a consequence the membership seriously diminished. The leaders of the several Bristol Corps, conscious of the



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severity of the struggle Britain was waging, and the need that every man of any age capable of bearing arms should be trained, by propaganda and personal effort infused new life into the movement, re-awakened public interest, and eventually met with gratifying response and ultimately considerable success.

The next important step was the consolidation of the several local Training Clubs into one organisation. To secure this object a public meeting under the presidency of the Lord Mayor (Alderman J. Swaish) was held at the Coliseum on March 15th, 1915. It was then decided to form the Bristol Volunteer Regiment, and a representative Committee was appointed. This Committee met frequently, and gradually the provincial difficulties were surmounted and a perfect organisation built up.

A Commandant was appointed and a regiment created with three battalions: (1) University, (2) Coliseum (incorporating Bristol East, Frenchay, Fishponds, Kingswood, Mangotsfield and Westbury), (3) Athletes (incorporating Bristol Rugby). The whole of the expenses of training, uniforms, etc., were borne by the individual volunteers, but as there was urgent need for miniature ranges and rifles, the Lord Mayor issued a public appeal for funds, and £707 13s. 6d. was subscribed.

The work of the Bristol Volunteers gradually grew in importance and usefulness, for in addition to the regular drills, field work and shooting practice, a large number of the members devoted their week-ends for several months to removing trees and hedges, and levelling and draining the large tract of ground forming the Filton Aerodrome. This work was much appreciated by the War Office and Royal Flying Corps.

A day and night guard took charge of premises wherein were stored a vast quantity of dangerous munitions, also guards were supplied at constructional works of military importance. Extensive sections of the railway lines in the vicinity were entrusted to the Bristol Volunteer Regiment in case of invasion, and the arrangements made for this important guard and the rehearsals of it were accorded high praise by the authorities. Other useful work was done by the Volunteers in building a pathway from Southmead Hospital to the main road, to enable wounded soldiers and their friends to walk in safety and comfort.



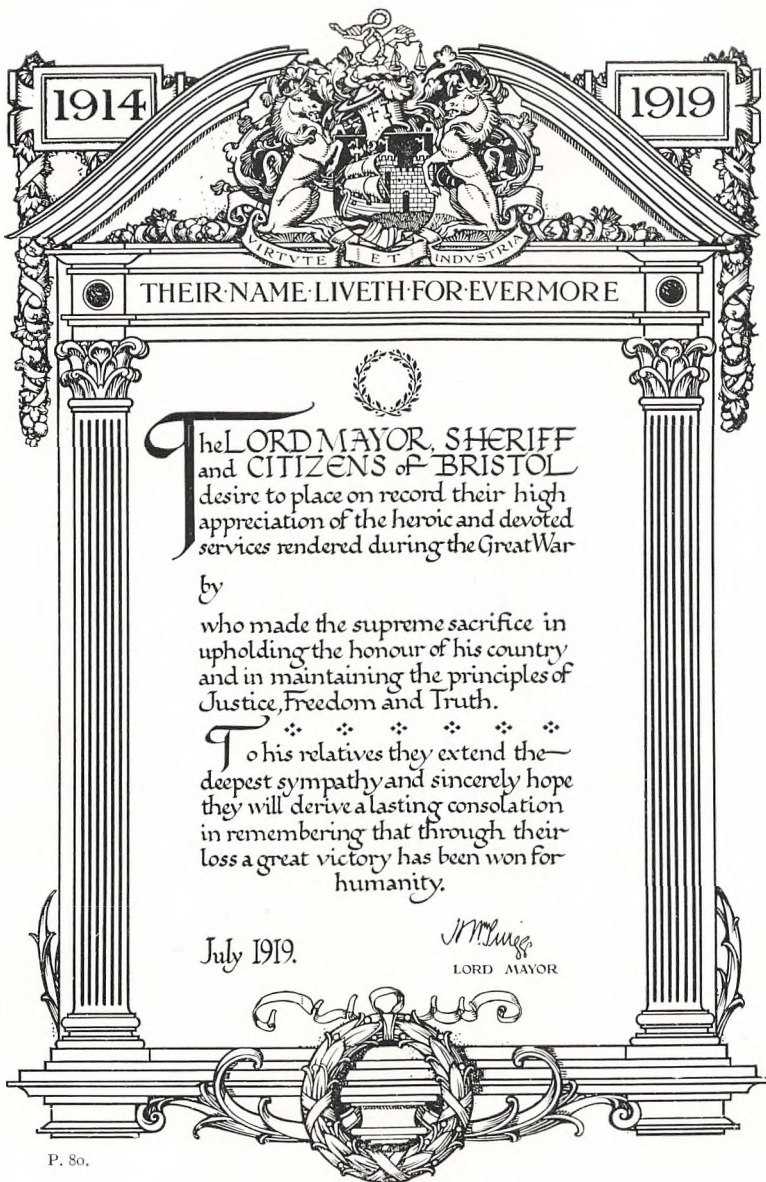
## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

In the spring of 1917, when the shortage of food became acute, the Bristol Volunteers assisted in production by giving their services in market gardens and allotments where owners were away on service. Prior to this, the raising of the military age and the commendable influx of officers and men into the services had considerably reduced the membership of the battalions. It therefore became necessary that a very determined effort should be made to ensure the Bristol Volunteer Regiment retaining its title and becoming worthy of our ancient city, particularly as the Army Council had now realised the practical value of the Volunteers, had revived and amended the Acts of Parliament pertaining to them, and had made the Volunteer units into a military force. A very energetic recruiting campaign was inaugurated by the Committee and it met with gratifying success, the battalion being raised above the minimum strength necessary for acceptance by the War Office.

The need of monetary assistance at this period was very real, and the application of the Committee to the Lord Mayor (Sir Barclay J. Baron) led him to institute a personal appeal to the citizens, which led to a generous response, £2,713 7s. od. being subscribed.

From now (June, 1916) the regiment was conducted on prescribed army lines, commissions were issued to officers and military status given to all ranks. Later the War Office appointed regular or territorial officers as full-time adjutants to each battalion, together with a selected staff of regulars as N.C.O. instructors, whilst the men were gradually fully armed and equipped from Government funds. The lessons of the war were not unnoted by the authorities, and the training of the Volunteers became of a very practical nature. The officers and N.C.O.'s of the Bristol Volunteer Regiment attended courses of instruction at the Southern Command Schools. Trenches were dug, trench warfare was rehearsed and practised, and there were periodical musketry courses on open ranges and extensive field tactics. Each battalion went into camp annually, and in August, 1918, they were brigaded at Minehead, where manœuvres of an advanced description were carried out. So effective had the training proved, and such a high state of efficiency had the three Bristol battalions attained, that they





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were honoured by being included in the scheme of National Defence, and positions allotted them in the event of invasion.

The Volunteers were requested to furnish a considerable number of men for service on the East Coast to replace the large drafts which it had been necessary to send to France. The Bristol Volunteer Regiment supplied the full quota of officers and men called for. In 1919 the regiment was given a place in the county regiment. The battalions became the 2nd, 4th, and 6th Volunteer Battalions of the Gloucester Regiment. From 1915 to 1919 the regiment was occasionally privileged to furnish guards of honour to His Majesty the King, as well as to several famous men who visited Bristol. The general work of the Volunteers became much appreciated by the War Office, and permanent honorary rank confirmed on all Volunteer officers on retirement, while certificates of service with thanks from His Majesty the King were issued to all ranks.

During its four and a half years' existence the regiment was inspected many times by eminent military officers, including the Commander-in-Chief (Field-Marshal Lord French). On every occasion it was complimented upon its efficiency and general bearing, and the regiment may therefore look back upon its short and strenuous life as one of the monuments of Bristol's patriotism in the hour of stress. Probably at least 10,000 men were drilled and taught to fight, and a large percentage of these passed into the army free of the self-consciousness natural to every recruit. Each had been well grounded in military knowledge, and must therefore have been of greater value to the army which has so nobly upheld the traditions of the country.

### BRISTOL UNIVERSITY CONTINGENT OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS.

When the Great War broke out this country possessed no general scheme for the training of officers in sufficient numbers to meet the great demand created by the sudden emergency. There were provisions for training candidates for permanent commissions in the Regular Army and the Territorial Force, but not for temporary commissions in the Regular Army. The heavy demand at the beginning of the war was met by granting temporary commissions to untrained men, and then training the already commissioned officer.



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The Officers' Training Corps was the only organisation the object of which was the selection and training of cadets of good education, and the submission of their names to the proper authorities in application for commissions. But the field of activity of the Officers' Training Corps, the inventor of which was Lord Haldane, Chancellor of the University of Bristol, was practically limited to school and University, though at the outbreak of war great freedom was allowed, and many extra-mural students were trained in the Bristol University Contingent.

Not until early in 1916 did the authorities inaugurate the system of training cadets for commissions at Officer Cadet Battalions. These Officer Cadet Battalions were based largely on the experience gained in the working of the Officers' Training Corps, and the University of Bristol was selected as the seat of one of the first three Officer Cadet Battalions, a testimony to the high esteem in which the Bristol University Contingent was held by the authorities. Finally cadets were allowed to continue their training at a contingent of the Officers' Training Corps till they were between eighteen and four months and eighteen and seven months. They were then sent to an Officers' Cadet Battalion for six to seven months before finally obtaining their commissions.

Work in the Bristol University Contingent was very strenuous. Except for the short leave granted at Easter in the course of the summer, and at Christmas, every cadet had to parade every morning at 9 a.m., and he was not dismissed for the day till 4 or 5 p.m. Every day began with forty-five minutes' physical drill under the care of specially trained cadet N.C.O.'s. Every Monday a night operation extending over four or five hours was carried out. Every Wednesday was devoted to a whole-day field scheme, and every Saturday morning to a half-day field scheme, for which by the kindness and generosity of landowners and farmers extensive tracts of land in the immediate neighbourhood of Bristol were available.

Bayonet fighting, drilling, musketry, map reading, lectures, tactical schemes were some of the subjects taught. The main object of all training was, however, the training in leadership. A fortnight's camp, held at Kelston since 1916, formed a very important feature in the training of the cadets. Training



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throughout was hard and strenuous, but every hardship was borne loyally by the cadets of this contingent.

About 1,000 cadets passed through the Bristol University Contingent after August, 1914, and over 700 of these obtained commissions. Over 100 made the supreme sacrifice, and about an equal number gained distinctions and honours, among these being one Victoria Cross.

### NO. 3 OFFICER CADET BATTALION.

No. 3 Officer Cadet Battalion was one of the three original Officer Cadet Battalions stationed in the University cities of Cambridge, Oxford and Bristol. During the period in which it was quartered in Bristol University over 2,000 officers were trained for commissions. These battalions were established in order to raise the standard of training of young officers by training and testing the candidates before they were gazetted to commissions instead of afterwards, as had been the case up to the beginning of 1916. Incidentally, it was estimated that the formation of these battalions would involve a saving to the country of about a million pounds per annum. These arguments had been put before the War Office in December, 1915, by the officer commanding the Bristol University Officers' Training Corps, and in view of this and the record of this Officers' Training Corps, Bristol University was selected as a suitable station. The result amply justified the choice, as the facilities available in Bristol for this training proved to be even better than expected. The battalion was established in February, 1916, and removed from Bristol to the Isle of Wight in January, 1918, only on account of the particularly urgent needs for accommodation in Bristol of the No. 6 School of Aeronautics of the Royal Air Force.

At first the course of training extended over a period of four months, but this was being extended when the battalion left Bristol. The work was under the closest direct supervision of the General Staff (War Office), and involved about 144 hours of instruction per month. This included a progressive course intended primarily to develop qualities of leadership based upon accurate knowledge. Each cadet was continually called upon to take command and give instruction in the various subjects of the course.



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The syllabus included infantry training, commencing with all forms of drill, physical training and bayonet fighting, proceeding to a comprehensive course of tactical work. About ten square miles of training ground were available for this, so that each candidate was constantly being practised and tested on unknown ground. The musketry training commenced with practice in the training of the recruit and concluded with range practices and elementary field practices organised as well as carried out by the cadets themselves. The other subjects to which instruction and practice were given were field engineering, trench warfare, bombing, anti-gas training, Lewis gun and revolver practice, military law in so far as required by subaltern officers, and topography, to which a great deal of attention was devoted. In the teaching of interior economy and military administration the greatest emphasis was laid upon the officer's first duty—that of personal supervision of the welfare of his men.

The subsequent distinguished records of the cadets trained in this Cadet Battalion showed that the great pains taken with their training had been adequately rewarded.

### ARMY CHAPLAINS.

Throughout the war there was great scope in Bristol and the neighbourhood for the valued activities of Chaplains to the Forces. During the winter of 1914-15 many thousands of troops were stationed in this city, including a brigade of Scottish infantry, and local units in training. Wounded soldiers soon began to arrive, and Bristol became a great military hospital centre; and nowhere were the devoted ministrations of army chaplains more appreciated than in the hospitals. A fine record is that of the chaplains' work in the home station of Bristol, which expanded into an S.C.F. District, comprising the counties of Gloucester and Somerset with the northern part of Wiltshire, and finally resolved itself into what was officially known as No. 2 Area, Southern Command. Shortly after the outbreak of war Canon J. G. Alford was mobilised as a C.T.F. (1st Class), and with the rank of colonel remained the senior Chaplain to the Forces in Bristol. Numerous Church of England chaplains were



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readily forthcoming ; many of them afterwards went overseas, but their work for the forces at home was at once taken up by other clergy. Though Bristol was largely denuded of troops during the later stages of the war, much work still remained for the army chaplains. New military organisations arrived in the No. 3 Officer Cadet Battalion (followed by the No. 6 School of Aeronautics, R.A.F.), the I. W. & D. Depot, R.E., at "The White City," and the Aircraft Acceptance Park at Filton. A sad duty was that of reading the burial service at the Soldiers' Corner, which was provided at Arno's Vale Cemetery through the agency of the Red Cross Society, where soldiers in Bristol who had succumbed to wounds or sickness were finally laid to rest.

For the spiritual welfare of soldiers belonging to communions other than the Church of England full provision was also made. The Presbyterians under the Rev. John Conway, the "United Board" men under the Rev. F. G. Benskin (who was appointed a Supervising Chaplain), and the Roman Catholics under Canon Lee were all thoroughly cared for. The harmony and Christian fellowship between all the chaplains was genuine and unbroken.

## UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL.

There were few institutions in the city on which the war fell more heavily than its infant University. Founded only in 1909, it was just beginning, so to speak, to feel its legs when it was overwhelmed by the great catastrophe. Within a few months the University saw itself deprived of half its staff, three-fourths of its men students, and a large part of its income. And under these three disabilities it had to do its best to maintain its position during the whole of the war. That it emerged from the trial with augmented prestige and public favour is evidence of the essential vitality of the institution.

It is satisfactory in the first place to record that during the absence of the men students the women students of the University played their part well, and managed to keep a real University life going throughout the whole of the troubled time. In addition to this, public attention was speedily attracted to the energy with which the remaining members of the University



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staff threw themselves into the various channels of new work which the war opened up. The work of the University Contingent of the Officers' Training Corps and the high repute which it gained has just been recorded. But the University, in addition, before the war was a month old took the initiative in the foundation of a Bristol Volunteer Force. Volunteering, it will be remembered, was frowned on by the War Office in the early days of the war ; but the University, announcing and organising, as it did, "evening classes in military drill," was immune from official criticism, and speedily there was brought together a body of men who were debarred from enlisting by age or other causes, but who were nevertheless anxious to take what part might conceivably fall to them in the defence of the country. From this origin grew the 1st (University) Battalion of the Bristol Volunteer Regiment, which was subsequently numbered as the 2nd Gloucestershire Battalion. Under Major Clifford Wing's energetic command this unit attained a high degree of efficiency and credit.

Nor were the efforts of the University found wanting in its own special fields of work. Notwithstanding the depletion of its staff, partly for active service in the war and partly by requisition of various departments of Government for scientific purposes, the University laboratories were throughout a scene of busy work in connection with the scientific issues of the great conflict. The nature and objects of much of this work were necessarily kept a secret at the time, and even now the public is only imperfectly informed as to the share which the chemists, the physicists, the mathematicians, the physiologists and the pathologists of this country had in gaining the final victory. It may be said, however, that in the Bristol laboratories of chemistry certain materials for the manufacture of explosives, gathered from about one-third of the area of England, were daily undergoing analysis for munition purposes ; while the Professor of Chemistry and his assistants were meanwhile occupying themselves with further and more recondite problems, including many connected with that production of subtle poison gases which, almost as much as anything else, contrived to baffle the efforts of the Hun. The physicists and mathematicians of the University were similarly employed in solving various problems arising in connection with



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aeroplanes and submarines ; while the department of Pathology watched sedulously over the safety of the city and its preservation from the subtle diseases generated by the war. The Engineers were hard at work training munition workers in scientific proficiency, while in the Physiological laboratories the physiological conditions of the labour employed in munition work were the subject of extensive investigations, published by the Government in a series of blue books, which proved of essential value in ensuring the highest possible rate of output throughout the later years of the war. The agricultural station of the University at Long Ashton, finally, made most important contributions to the ever pressing question of the food supply of the country.

In the more active operations of the war, at the same time, the members of the new University did not fail to bear their due part. Information to hand shows that 13 members of the staff, 106 graduates and ex-students, and 221 students successively departed for the front in the fighting units, while 43 members of the University served the War Office in a medical capacity either abroad or at home. The University's roll of honour shows a list of 137 dead, including one of the most brilliant professors on the University staff, the late Arthur Rowland Skemp. Among the distinctions gained are a Victoria Cross, 2 D.S.O.'s, 42 Military Crosses, 5 bars to M.C., 1 Distinguished Flying Cross, 6 Croix de Guerre, 1 C.B., 1 O.B.E., 3 M.B.E., 1 Croix de Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, 1 Order of the White Eagle, 5th Class, with Swords, 17 mentions in despatches—a creditable list for a University whose membership had had so few years to grow.

And it must not be forgotten that the University during the war received a benefaction of inestimable value in the gift which was made to it by Mr. Henry H. Wills of the whole of the Royal Fort property and some adjacent land, adding to the available site of the institution eight and a half acres in one of the most commanding situations in Bristol.

### CLIFTON COLLEGE.

For many years a steady stream of valuable young officers has passed from Clifton through Woolwich and Sandhurst into the army. At the beginning of the war it was calculated that



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700 Old Cliftonians were serving in the regular army, British and Indian, and 80, many of whom, of course, had left school at a very early age, were in the navy. By the end of the year 1914 the total number, so far as could be ascertained, was just doubled, and in ever-increasing volume the stream continued flowing until the very end of the war. For every Cliftonian who fell four or five others stepped forward to take his place. And they came from all parts of the world. There were many in the first Canadian contingent, Australia sent some stalwarts, and from New Zealand among others came Sergeant Martineau, who lost an arm and gained the V.C. in the South African War, who served in the Natal rebellion a year or two later, and now once more answered the call and was found in the New Zealand A.S.C. facing all the horrors and difficulties of the Gallipoli campaign. And there were many others who crossed the world to help the Mother Country, from India and Ceylon, from China and Peru and, when their own troubles in Cape Colony and German South-West Africa were over, from South Africa.

In the first list of Old Cliftonians with the Forces, issued in January, 1915, Sir Douglas Haig figures as Commander of the First Army Corps, Major-General W. R. Birdwood held a command in India, and there were five others of the same rank and ten Brigadiers. The last edition of the list shows 23 Major-Generals and 52 Brigadiers, among them being included names very familiar to Cliftonians, such as Younghusband, Luard, Bonham-Carter and Peck. But to many what will appear almost as remarkable as the prominence achieved by the professional soldiers, who held high commands, is the number of men who, being without previous military training, joined the ranks as the shortest road to active service, and earned their commissions by the sternest practical experience. Many men of mature age and weighty responsibilities did so ; once or twice boys ran away from school and enlisted, and had to be traced and recovered, not without difficulty, from the military authorities. Perhaps the most remarkable case was that of "Private Thomas Hardy," of the Queen's, in reality an officer of a famous Indian regiment, who, ordered to remain on the North-West Frontier, where things were then quiet and safe, vanished one day and by some unrecorded means made his way to



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England. Here he enlisted in an equally famous British regiment, and was killed in action after performing prodigies of valour.

It was, indeed, a national army which went forth to war, and the Clifton contingent was typical of the rest, in that it contained representatives of all ages, capacities and professions. Besides the regular soldier, who for years had been diligently preparing himself for a great emergency, there were statesmen, civil servants, lawyers, doctors, schoolmasters and clergy, pioneers from distant dependencies, grey-haired men and boys fresh from school. The senior Cliftonian serving entered the school in January, 1863. He had served years before in German cavalry regiments, had enlisted in the 1st Life Guards, and had risen to the rank of captain in the 19th Hussars. He had fought in the Egyptian campaigns from 1882 to 1885, and again in the South African War. Holding the honourable position of Sword-Bearer to the Lord Mayor of London, he claimed his release when war began and was sent for duty to Ireland. On the other hand, in the Roll of Honour will be found names of more than one who were but new-comers to the school in the autumn months of 1914.

And as men of all ages and callings came flocking to the Colours when the need arose, so in every branch of the army there will be found Cliftonians. The greatest number may be found in the British line regiments, in every one of which a Clifton representative was serving at some time during the war. In many regiments there were, of course, numerous representatives, and in the Gloucesters most of all, 98 in fact, the Somersets and the Worcesters coming next, delightful evidence that the call of the West lingers in the ears of Cliftonians long after their school days are over.

The names of more than three thousand Cliftonians will be found in the Muster Roll deposited in the School Chapel, and five hundred and eighty of them laid down their lives. Far-flung was the British battle-line in the Great War, and it may be claimed that at the remotest outpost, at the farthest end of the line, there Cliftonians were found fighting and dying. And from every battlefield there came home commendation of loyal and valiant service, rendered, we may be sure, eagerly and unselfishly. Five Victoria Crosses, 180



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D.S.O.'s and 300 Military Crosses and many other precious distinctions were gained, and others besides Cliftonians have been thrilled by the recital of deeds of desperate valour or undaunted leadership at Zeebrugge, in the North Sea and Baltic, in furious fighting in the trenches or in the black darkness of midnight raids. But who will believe that the school's list of honours, lengthy as it is, really contains the full fine flower of Clifton chivalry? Certainly the last to believe it will be those who best know the power of the British lad to dare and to suffer and perhaps to die unseen and in silence.

### BRISTOL GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

The war record of the Bristol Grammar School includes a roll of service of something like 800 names, but many more than these have no doubt served. Those who have fallen number 105, and the decorations include 2 Victoria Crosses, 3 C.B.'s, 5 D.S.O.'s, 33 M.C.'s, 3 D.C.M.'s, 9 Croix de Guerre, and several other foreign medals and orders.

An outstanding name among those Old Boys who lost their lives is that of Brigadier-General F. W. Lumsden, who, in addition to the Victoria Cross, was awarded no fewer than three bars to his D.S.O. Originally an officer in the Marines, it was by his remarkable series of exploits when in charge of artillery that Lumsden acquired his peculiar fame. At school, along with his two brothers, he was a boarder in Mr. Browne's House, and left in 1888 to pass into Sandhurst. The gallant performance of the other Grammar School V.C., Captain M. Angell James, is recorded elsewhere in this volume.

A large proportion of those who won distinction in the field had formerly been members of the school contingent of the Officers' Training Corps, who have been congratulated by the War Office on the work and spirit shown throughout the past five years.

The additional war-time training required of all senior boys in the Corps who were qualifying for Officer Cadet Battalions involved quite abnormal pressure in the life of a day school, where the limited number of hours available each day for work, games and social institutions was already strained to the utmost. The boys, however, responded with



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the greatest keenness to these new demands, and the O.T.C. carried on with remarkable vigour during the whole war period. A good deal of agricultural work was done, not only by older boys, but also by boys in the middle forms, notably the school troop of scouts. There were holiday camps in different parts of Somerset, such as the flax-picking camp of 1916 at Petherton, as well as allotment work in the summer during term time. All these forms of war work entailed much devoted labour on the part of the staff as well as the boys themselves. The officers of the O.T.C. and those masters who took charge of the various camps and allotment squads were unsparing in their efforts. Considering the large increase of school numbers during the war, and the great difficulties due to depletion of regular staff and continual inevitable change of temporary masters, it is gratifying to find that so much was achieved.

An important feature of the school's contribution to local war effort was its voluntary surrender of the playing-field in Tyndall's Park, which by its central situation was of particular value both to regular units and also to Volunteers and local cadet troops. A large part of the training of the No. 3 Officer Cadet Battalion, and later of something like 1,000 Air Force Cadets, took place on this ground, and the buildings were also utilised from time to time for military examinations and similar purposes.

The school War Memorial is to take the form of a decorative panelled treatment of the Great Hall, recording the names of the fallen, and also a Scholarship Fund.

### MERCHANT VENTURERS' TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

The war work performed by the Merchant Venturers' Technical College was wide in its scope and exceedingly valuable in its character. Mention may first be made of the activities of members of the staff. Thus the Principal (Professor J. Wertheimer) gave popular lectures to sailors and soldiers on Salisbury Plain and in Gloucestershire and Kent. He took command of the School Cadet Corps (with the rank of Cadet-Major), and in order the better to fit himself for his duties as the senior school cadet officer in Bristol, he spent four vacations of a month each attached to regular battalions. He



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also organised the various kinds of war work undertaken by the College. Professor Munro took over part of the work of a secondary school teacher who was serving in the Army. Professor Ferrier did a large amount of testing work for various Government departments, and during the war 7,073 specimens were tested in the Department of Civil Engineering. Professor Robertson undertook research work for the Admiralty in connection with the detection of submarines. Professor Morgan carried out research work in relation to the manufacture of Mills grenades and engines for military aeroplanes. Mr. Watson, the lecturer in Mechanical Engineering, trained skilled artisans for work in munition factories, while the lecturers in Civil and Electrical Engineering left the Faculty in order to enter works engaged in the production of war materials. There were many special classes formed to train men and women for various war purposes. All attracted numerous students, especially the classes for training women for ambulance work, those in first aid being attended by 698 women, and those in home nursing by 348. Highly important were the classes for training disabled sailors and soldiers for various occupations. Up to the beginning of 1920 the total number of students who had attended one or other of the special classes was 2,319. The College arranged for lectures on Aeronautics to be given under the auspices of the Air Board; the total attendances at these numbered 2,700. The College War Savings Association collected over £2,500 during the two and a half years ended July, 1919.

The Secondary School Cadet Corps on several occasions worked for the City Engineer in clearing snow from certain streets in the city, and a squad of twenty-eight boys, mostly cadets, volunteered for work on the land in Anglesea, and spent six weeks in helping the farmers. The Government required horse-chestnuts in order to extract material wanted for munitions from them in place of using wheat; 3,500 lb. were collected and sent to the Director of Propellant Supplies. The Secondary School boys decided to devote the sum which would otherwise have been available for prizes at their athletic sports to War Funds, and were thus able to hand to the Treasurer of the Bristol Branch of the Red Cross Society £47 11s. od., as well as £13 to the Serbian Relief Fund.



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The total number of present and former members of the College who have served with the Colours is not known, but information has been received in regard to 3,200 individuals, of whom 720 held commissions and 539 were non-commissioned officers. Summary: Distinctions, 209; killed in action or died on active service, 323; wounded or injured, 583; civilian members of the College who have lost their lives while on war service, 8; distinctions awarded to civilian members of the College for war service, 5.

In all the schools of the city, public and private, some kind of war work was undertaken by girls as well as boys. Several elementary schools ran allotments with marked success. War Savings Associations were formed and large sums raised in that way—in the year ended December, 1918, the children attending schools under the control of the Education Committee had increased their savings from £17,835 to £30,448—while the children generously supported comforts funds.

### VICTORIA CROSS WINNERS.

At least six Victoria Crosses won in the Great War stand to the credit of Bristol, and on February 15th, 1919, honour was paid to five of the valorous winners at a great gathering held in the Colston Hall, where gold watches and illuminated addresses were presented to them. Similar gifts were made later to Commander C. C. Dobson, D.S.O., who won the Cross during the attack on Kronstadt Harbour on August 18th, 1919.

#### *Colonel Burges.*

Lieut.-Colonel Daniel Burges, V.C., D.S.O., son of Mr. Daniel Burges, a former Town Clerk of Bristol, is an officer of the Gloucestershire Regiment, and won the Cross on September 18th, 1918, while in command of a battalion of the South Wales Borderers at Jumeaux, in the Balkans. Lieut.-Colonel Burges maintained direction with great skill, though every known landmark was completely obscured by dust and smoke. Though himself wounded, quite regardless of his own safety he kept moving to and fro amongst his men, encouraging them and assisting them to maintain



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formation and direction. Finally, as they neared the enemy's position, he led them forward through a decimating fire until he was again hit twice and fell unconscious. His coolness and personal courage were most marked throughout, and afforded a magnificent example to all ranks. Unhappily, the severity of Lieut.-Colonel Burges' wounds necessitated the amputation of a leg.

### *Captain Angell James.*

Captain Manley Angell James, V.C., M.C., of the Gloucestershire Regiment, who is a son of Dr. Angell James, of Bishopston, was awarded the Cross for his valour at the time the Huns were making their desperate "push" in the spring of 1918. After splendid work during several days—though wounded he refused to leave his company—he was ordered by the senior officer on the spot to hold on "to the last," in order to enable the brigade to be extricated. He then led his company forward in a local counter-attack on his own initiative and was again wounded. He was last seen working a machine-gun single-handed after having been wounded a third time. The *Gazette* stated: "No praise can be too high for the gallant stand made by this company ('A' Company of the 8th Gloucesters) and Captain James by his dauntless courage and magnificent example undoubtedly enabled the battalion to be withdrawn before being completely cut off." The Huns found Captain James unconscious in a shell-hole, and after nine months' captivity he got safely back to England.

### *2nd-Lieutenant Parsons.*

2nd-Lieutenant Hardy Falconer Parsons, son of the Rev. J. Ash Parsons, of Redland, succumbed to the injuries received in accomplishing the magnificent deed which won him the Cross. It was awarded (as gazetted on October 17th, 1917) for most conspicuous bravery during a night attack by a strong party of the enemy on a bombing post held by his command. The bombers holding the block were forced back, but 2nd-Lieutenant Parsons remained at his post and, single-handed, and although severely scorched by liquid fire, he continued to hold up the enemy with bombs until severely wounded. At the civic gathering the watch and address were handed by the Lord Mayor to the deceased officer's father.



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### *Sergeant Rendle.*

Sergeant Thomas Edward Rendle, 1st Battalion the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, was the first Bristol man to win the Victoria Cross in the Great War. It was awarded for conspicuous bravery on November 20th, 1914, near Wulverghem, when he attended to the wounded under very heavy shell and rifle fire, and rescued men from the trenches in which they had been buried by the blowing in of the parapets by the fire of the enemy's heavy howitzers.

### *Lance-Corporal Room.*

Lance-Corporal Frederick G. Room, of the Royal Irish Regiment, was formerly a member of the Church Lads' Brigade in Bristol. He was gazetted to the Victoria Cross on October 17th, 1917, for most conspicuous bravery when in charge of his company stretcher-bearers. During the day the company had many casualties, principally from enemy machine-guns and snipers. Lance-Corporal Room worked continuously under intense fire, dressing the wounded and helping to evacuate them. Throughout this period, with complete disregard for his own life, he showed unremitting devotion to his duties. By his courage and fearlessness he was the means of saving many of his comrades' lives.

### *Commander Dobson.*

Commander Claude Congreve Dobson, D.S.O., R.N., is the youngest son of the late Mr. Nelson Dobson and Mrs. Dobson, of 16 College Road, Clifton. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for most conspicuous gallantry, skill, and devotion to duty on the occasion of the attack on Kronstadt Harbour on August 18th, 1919. Commander Dobson organised and was in command of the Coastal Motor-boat Flotilla. He led the Flotilla through the chain of forts to the entrance of the Harbour. Coastal Motor-boat No. 31, from which he directed the general operations, then passed in, under a very heavy machine-gun fire, and torpedoed the Bolshevik battleship *Andrei Pervozanni*, subsequently returning through the heavy fire of the forts and batteries to the open sea.



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### COAST-WATCHING.

The estimated number of coastguards embarked on mobilisation for war from the Western District was 160 men. These were replaced by civilian coast-watchers, boy scouts, sea scouts and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve ratings as they became available. In many cases during the absence of coast-guard men their wives and daughters were employed at the stations as telephone attendants and otherwise.

The guarding of the coast during the war was carried out by civilian coast-watchers. In the Western District the coast-line was divided into ten districts, which included 134 stations. The number of civilians employed on these duties was 550, and with them were 60 boy scouts and sea scouts. Each district was in charge of a naval officer, who directed and supervised the work with the assistance of local gentlemen who were appointed as deputy coast-watching officers for this purpose. Where possible the civilian coast-watchers were obtained from local men of the fishermen and seafaring class who were unfit for service with the regular forces, and who, by reason of their professional knowledge of the coast and its local peculiarities, were eminently fitted for this work. The coast-watchers worked in three watches night and day, their duties being to look out for signals, suspicious lights, or anything of a suspicious character on their guards ; to note all traffic, movements of petrol, oil or other suspicious stores ; to note all boats or vessels approaching or leaving the shore ; to inspect all strange craft, note cargoes landed and their destination, and to investigate hiding-places. They were empowered to arrest suspected persons and stop and search vehicles or vessels.

The Boy Scouts Association furnished the number of scouts employed, and they were found very useful in connection with coast-watching and coast-guard work. They were in many instances accommodated in coast-guard stations, forming a cottage into a scout barracks or camp, and cooking their own meals and looking after themselves.

### THE REMOUNT DEPOT, SHIREHAMPTON.

Bristol played a great part during the war in the supply of horses and mules for the British forces at home and abroad,



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and the story of the Shirehampton Remount Depot and Veterinary Hospital is one that will rank high in the history of the part the city played during the great conflict. The extreme value of the climate of the district and the healthful properties of the water supply rendered Bristol one of the most beneficial stations opened by the authorities, and in this respect it was perhaps pre-eminent.

The Depot was opened in September, 1914, and was closed in October, 1919. It was erected to contain 5,000 animals, and was instituted for the reception of horses and mules from Canada, the United States and other countries. Divided into ten squadrons, the Depot occupied a huge expanse of ground, and in addition to its work as a receiving station, it was also a large hospital base, and contained a veterinary hospital for 500 horses and an isolation ward for 100 infectious cases. Opened with a civilian staff of 1,380 men under army officers, the Depot was turned into a military unit in 1915.

During the five years of its activity a total of 347,045 horses and mules passed through the Depot. From overseas 317,165 animals were received. From Ireland came 6,712, from other home depots and home purchased 9,357, and repatriated from France since the Armistice 13,811. The first consignment of horses arrived on October 24th, 1914, and from that date ships arrived with varying regularity up to November 25th, 1918. The main object of the Depot was to retain animals from fourteen to twenty-one days, test with mallein for glanders, get them fit and clean, and pass them on to reserve units at home for further training before being sent overseas. When mange was discovered amongst the overseas horses disinfecting baths were instituted, and the treatment was wonderfully successful in checking the disease. The fact that so little mange occurred in the British army animals on any front speaks volumes for the care taken of the horses and mules. It was also very noticeable how quickly the losses in animals during the voyage from America to England were reduced to a negligible quantity, and it was a common occurrence for a ship carrying 1,000 horses to arrive without a single loss. It was here that the climate and water of Bristol were shown to be beneficial, for the recovery of the horses after their voyage was quick and lasting. The largest number of animals landed



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in one day was 2,958, and the largest number accommodated at one time was 7,244.

The Commandant of the Depot, Colonel D. C. Carter, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., was in charge the whole of the time. He was extremely popular with his staff, both officers and men, and he paid great attention to the care and training of the animals by methods in every way humane and considerate. Under him he had a capable staff who took a great interest in their work.

Toward the end of 1919 the Depot was cleared, the Corporation of Bristol purchasing a number of the huts for relieving the extreme shortage of houses in the neighbourhood.

### THE WOMEN'S SERVICES.

Recruiting for the rank and file of the Queen Mary's Auxiliary Army Corps, the Women's Royal Naval Service, and the Women's Royal Air Force was entirely in the hands of the Ministry of Labour Employment Department, with the exception of the Queen Mary's Auxiliary Army Corps, which was recruited for the first few months by transfer from the Women's Legion and by the Women's Branch of the National Service Department. The South-Western Divisional Office of the Ministry of Labour in Bristol was the centre of the recruiting; a special section dealt with all the applications for enrolment made to the Employment Exchanges in the area, and all the clerical work in connection with the selection and Medical Boards for the services, together with the calling up of the women to the depot hostels after enrolment, was carried on there.

Temporary shelter for recruits was most kindly given by the G.F.S. and the Y.W.C.A. hostels, and invaluable help was rendered by members of the Bristol V.A.D., who acted as orderlies and assistants to the doctors at the Medical Boards throughout the period of recruiting; and before permanent arrangements were made for the Boards the Bristol Recruiting Authorities gave their ready and willing help in providing the necessary appliances and supplies of forms.

The Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, to which Queen Mary later gave her name, which is still popularly known as the "Waacs," came into being in the spring of 1917, when the value



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of women's work in camp cookhouses and as motor drivers had already been proved by members of the Women's Legion, who formed the nucleus of the "Waacs" when the War Office decided to create an auxiliary force of women. The first appearance of members of the corps in Bristol was in the early autumn of 1917, when Canynge Hall, perhaps better known as the Imperial Hotel, was opened as a depot hostel for all the women recruited in the South-Western Counties and South Wales, and a number of empty houses were also taken in the neighbourhood, accommodating in all about 500 women. There was the necessary permanent staff of officers, forewomen, clerks and domestic workers, but the majority of the girls remained in the hostel for only a few days, to gain some knowledge of drill and army etiquette and discipline and to receive their uniform. They were then sent out in drafts to supply the demand in camps and barracks. The women were enrolled for various classes of work, and the circumstances of their lives were widely different, but they lived together on equal terms. Many of them had had no experience of life in a large community, some of them were accustomed to ease and luxury in their own homes, and to all the army life, with its discipline, plain conditions of living, and lack of privacy was entirely new, but they soon caught the spirit of the comradeship of the Army, which was the spirit of the nation. Bristolians became very familiar with the sight of uniformed women through the days of 1918. They might be seen drilling in Whatley Road under an energetic officer or forewoman, going for brisk route marches, or out with their friends when off duty; and a marvellous change was noticeable in a few days between the rather shy and awkward recruits, clad in mufti, who arrived at the hostel often very homesick and tired after long journeys from remote country districts, and the same women a few days later, in uniform, responding quickly to their drill instructors, and standing smartly to attention when speaking to their officers, whom they soon learned to address as "Ma'am."

The fact of a crisis in the war was strikingly brought home to the hostel at the time of the great retreat, when the fate of the Allies seemed for a while to be hanging in the balance, for all the women then in the depot were sent home on leave, so that if it were found necessary to send the women back to



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England from the bases in France, accommodation should be ready for a large number of them. Fortunately the danger passed, and the women were recalled from leave, and the posting of freshly enrolled recruits to the hostel was resumed.

Much was done for the girls during the time that the hostel was open, and they seemed to appreciate to the full the kindly efforts of hospitable Bristol to make them feel welcome and at home. A clubroom was opened in a hall belonging to Tyndale Chapel, where the girls could read and write and play games. The garage in the garden of the Y.W.C.A. in Whiteladies Road was opened as the "Waac Hut," books and writing materials were supplied and refreshments could be obtained. On Sundays a Bible Class was held and was well attended. In addition a Girls' Club in connection with the Pro-Cathedral opened its doors to the members of the Corps one evening a week, and sometimes as many as a hundred "Waacs" joined in the dancing and games which were provided. Miss May Bolt arranged an entertainment in the large hall of the hostel once a fortnight during the whole period the depot was opened, and other amusements were also organised.

A large contingent of members of the Corps took part in a recruiting rally for the Q.M.A.A.C. which was held in Bristol on June 29th, 1918. They assembled in College Green, and conducted by a military band marched to the Downs, where an open-air meeting was held and was addressed by Lieut.-Colonel J. O'D. Ingram, D.S.O., Colonel W. E. P. Burges, Mrs. Durand (Recruiting Controller Q.M.A.A.C.), Dr. Fairfield (Area Medical Controller, Q.M.A.A.C.) and Miss Deane, O.B.E. (Ministry of Labour). A certain number of women came forward as recruits, but the majority of Bristol women answered the call to women to take up work in the local factories and war industries.

The "Waacs" took part in the procession on America Day, Fourth of July, 1918, and by their smart appearance and their well-ordered marching worthily upheld the traditions of the British Army, and gave the onlookers an impression of discipline and efficiency. The women also shared in the general rejoicing on Armistice Day, all those stationed at the hostel marching to St. Saviour's Church in the evening to take part in a Thanksgiving Service. They sang lustily on the return march, and spent a gay evening in dancing and playing games.



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No further women were enrolled in the Corps, and the hostel was closed almost immediately after the Armistice, only the house which was used as a sick-bay being retained for medical examinations prior to discharge. The mess of the No. 3 Officer Cadet Battalion was staffed by "Waacs," and for a while a contingent of the same Corps staffed the mess of the School of Aeronautics until it was taken over by the W.R.A.F.; and they worked as cooks, domestics and clerks at the Remount Camp at Shirehampton and at the Motor Transport Depot at Avonmouth.

Bristol's connection with the Women's Royal Naval Service was very slight, a certain number of recruits came forward, but this service was more popular in the dockyards and coast towns, where many women naturally wished to join the service to which their fathers, brothers and friends belonged. Selection and Medical Boards were held in Bristol, and an officer from the W.R.N.S. Headquarters at Cardiff attended as President; but only one member of the service actually worked in this district.

Recruiting for the Women's Royal Air Force, the youngest of the women's services, began in the summer of 1918, and it proved a very popular service. Members of the Q.M.A.A.C. and the W.R.N.S. who were serving with units of the R.A.F. were asked to transfer to the W.R.A.F., and a large number of additional women were enrolled, both for domestic and clerical work, and also for technical work in the aeroplane sheds, many of them working as examiners, fitters, sailmakers, dopers and engine cleaners. Members of this force staffed the messes for officers, cadets, sergeants and men at the No. 6 School of Military Aeronautics stationed at the Bristol University, and lived in hostels in the neighbourhood, while the clerks working at the headquarters of the School and the motor drivers belonged to the Immobile Branch, and lived in their own homes. The largest number of women were employed at the cadets' mess, which was in the University buildings at the outset and afterwards moved to the Victoria Rooms. Here the members of the women's force did all the work except the stoking. The cooks and waitresses worked under experienced forewomen, and a high standard of order, efficiency and cleanliness was maintained. About 400 members of the W.R.A.F. worked at



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the No. 3 Repair Depot at Yate, and a number were also stationed at the aerodrome at Filton. All the latter lived in hut hostels on the spot, but the majority of those working at Yate belonged to the Immobile Branch of the Force and travelled to and from their homes in Bristol daily. Some of these women belonged to the clerical and domestic categories, but the greater number were employed in the sheds on engineering work to take the place of men wherever possible in skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled work.

The Bristol Branch of the Federated Training Schools for Policewomen and Patrols was recognised by the War Office as a training centre for women police for the services. The women were carefully chosen from among those enrolled, and the first part of the training course was considered as probationary; they lived in a special hostel and attended the School for lectures and instruction, and also did patrol work in connection with the women stationed at the depot hostel; they were trained in drill and ju-jitsu, and when seen marching from the School to their quarters they appeared to be a fine, capable body of women, likely to be of service in maintaining discipline and a high standard of conduct in camp.

### WAR PENSIONS.

When war broke out the only established organisation in existence for giving immediate relief to dependents of Reserve men suddenly called back to the colours was the Sailors' and Soldiers' Families Association, of which the late Mrs. George A. Gibbs, of Tyntesfield, wife of the Member of Parliament for Bristol West, was the local President. She at once opened an office in Bristol, and Mr. W. H. Williams accepted the post of Hon. Secretary. Much valuable aid was rendered in the first period of the war, for which the fighting men felt very grateful. A number of Bristol ladies lent their help. The first headquarters were in Clifton, but several branch offices were opened at convenient centres in the city. In 1915 the work of this voluntary association was taken over by a statutory committee, and in the following year the Government passed an Act of Parliament setting up local War Pensions Committees. Considerable difficulty was experienced in finding adequate



## THE MILITARY EFFORT

head offices, and after five had been occupied in succession the historic Old Library premises in King Street, with associations of Coleridge, Southey, Humphry Davy and other distinguished subscribers, were adapted and made permanent headquarters for the Committee, of which Alderman E. H. Cook has been Chairman since the Act came into operation and Mr. Williams Secretary.

The work of the Committee quickly grew four-fold, and at the time of the signing of the Armistice there were nearly 11,000 discharged men on the books receiving such medical and hospital treatment and such training in handicrafts and professions as were calculated to enable them to restart civil life with good hope of success. At the six branch offices the needs of 10,000 women and children were being ministered to by the Committee. From the King Street offices the King's Fund has been administered. This Fund is for the purpose of assisting disabled men to restart in business so as to augment their incomes. Since August, 1918, 305 favourable decisions have been arrived at in this connection, and £7,735 9s. od. administered. Here also have been administered the Grand Fleet Fund, the Navy League Overseas Relief Fund, and several regimental relief funds, and it is estimated that a quarter of a million of money has been dealt with by the organisations represented at this office. When the late Sir Barclay Baron was Lord Mayor he received a welcome gift of 2,000 dollars from California to distribute as a war charity, and that was dispensed at King Street. At one period it was reported that more than a thousand letters were written every week by Mr. Williams' staff, and 200 to 300 interviews took place every day.

The Pensions Committee are, of course, actively concerned in all efforts to train disabled men to become craftsmen, and have carefully promoted and watched the various schemes. Originally the duty of training rested on the Committee, but after the signing of the Armistice it passed to the Ministry of Labour, and a large factory in Radnor Road, built during the war to train men and women in air craftsmanship was adapted as an instructional factory for training disabled men in the South-Western Area to take up some handicraft. The proposal to establish a Lord Roberts Memorial Workshop in the city has been furthered in every possible way by the



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Pensions Committee. A special committee has been appointed to provide a workshop at an estimated cost of £50,000 to serve Bristol and the South-West. Women dependents of men who have died in the war have been given practical help in attempts to earn a living, as, for example, three sisters, each of whom was given a sewing machine. Thousands of women have been assisted in supplementing their incomes.

As might be expected, the Committee and staff have seen some of the seamy side of human nature. Sometimes it is truth which is conspicuously lacking in the details of an application, and sometimes there is present an impudence which is more humorous than criminal. It must have been a waggish leg-puller who appealed to the Committee for a grant to purchase a piano for a little daughter who might thus be charmed away from undesirable playmates in the gutter.

In the autumn of 1919 the Ministry of Pensions decided to decentralise in order to ensure quicker administration, and Bristol was selected for the headquarters of the South-West region. The Clifton Down Hotel was acquired, and a large staff of clerks installed under Major Skirrow, D.S.O. There was some local opposition to the taking of the hotel because of the scarcity of living accommodation, but it was silenced by showing that no other suitable building existed in Bristol, and if it could not be used the regional headquarters must go elsewhere.



## Chapter II

### The Call to the Colours







## CHAPTER II

### THE CALL TO THE COLOURS

PRE-WAR ORGANISATION—CITIZENS' RECRUITING COMMITTEE FORMED—  
FIRST VOLUNTARY SCHEME—"BRISTOL'S OWN"—WORK AT COLSTON  
HALL—THE DERBY SCHEME—THE TRIBUNALS—LOCAL UNITS—  
MUNITION WORKERS' BADGES—CONSCRIPTION—NATIONAL SERVICE  
—SPECIAL EFFORTS AND INCIDENTS—GIFTS TO THE CITY—  
HOMAGE TO HEROES—WELCOME HOME—NATIONAL REGISTRATION.

BRISTOL's great achievements in recruiting now claim attention. The suddenness and greatness of the demand for men were responded to with patriotic enthusiasm. Never were such scenes witnessed in the city's long history as those of the surging crowds of recruits offering themselves in the early days of the war. How these numbers were dealt with, medically examined, attested and passed into the ranks of that grand new Army which astonished the world shall now be told. The country owes a deep debt of gratitude to those citizens who toiled during those dark days to keep up the flow of recruits for our gallant men in the field. The total number of men raised in Bristol for the King's Forces during the war was approximately 56,000, excluding serving soldiers and sailors, territorials and reservists.

Recruiting for His Majesty's Forces commanded very little interest in pre-war days. The work was carried on in peace time in Bristol by one permanent Recruiting Officer with the assistance of three or four Recruiting Sergeants, and the number of recruits raised each year was comparatively speaking insignificant. Immediately Great Britain declared war upon Germany it was seen that the recruiting arrangements were quite inadequate, added to which the Recruiting Officer had to deal with mobilisation instructions, which provided that skilled men of all branches of industry, including motor drivers and artificers of every kind, should at once be enlisted for service



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with the Expeditionary Force. Full details of the requirements of each branch of the Expeditionary Force were carefully prepared and set forth years before the outbreak, and the ports of embarkation of the various branches selected, Avonmouth being the port selected for the formation and embarkation of the mechanical transport. It will be readily understood that this work alone would necessitate a staff of considerable size, whereas there were only the Recruiting Officer for Bristol, Major John Carr, M.B.E., and his few Recruiting Sergeants to administer these mobilisation instructions, and immediately it became generally known war had been declared, all those willing to volunteer for military service flocked to the Recruiting Office in Colston Street. Meanwhile the Proclamation was published ordering mobilisation of all reservists, officers and men, who were ordered to join their units or war stations. This had the effect of depleting the Recruiting Staff, as some of the Recruiting Sergeants, being serving soldiers, had to re-join their units. It soon, therefore, became urgent that some means should be found for dealing with the Recruiting problem. As a temporary measure an extra office was opened in Old Market Street, and afforded some little relief to the rush of recruits at Colston Street ; but matters were becoming more and more congested, with the result that on Wednesday, August 12th, 1914, at a meeting convened by the Lord Mayor, it was decided to form a Committee of citizens to run a large recruiting office, Colonel W. E. P. Burges, O.B.E., being the chosen Recruiting Officer. The Lord Mayor (Alderman John Swaish) was elected Chairman, and he deputed his duties to an Acting Chairman, Sir Herbert Ashman, Bart., agreeing to accept that position. It was decided to take Colston Hall, and arrangements were made for occupying this building forthwith.

Meanwhile matters had been reaching a climax at Avonmouth. Men, lorries and motor buses were arriving from all parts of the country in a continual stream through the city. Incidentally many of them lost their way, and found themselves at various points where they were not wanted, as the route to Avonmouth via the Downs, Stoke Bishop and Shirehampton Park is not too easy for a stranger to follow. This difficulty, however, was early remedied by the erection of temporary sign-posts, many of which remain to the present





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ALDERMAN SIR JOHN SWAISH, K.B.E., J.P.  
(*Lord Mayor 1913-14, 1914-15*).







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time, at points scores of miles away from Bristol, lettered "To Avonmouth." The question of feeding the men at Avonmouth was at first a difficult one, but citizens were quickly on the scene to do what they could to meet the wants of the men who were arriving at all hours of the day and night.

The work of enlisting the men was carried on at rooms placed at the disposal of the Recruiting Officer by Messrs. C. J. King & Sons Ltd., and all motor drivers who were not already in the Reserve were medically examined and enlisted forthwith, afterwards being clothed and posted to companies. Meanwhile their lorries were loaded on the transports, and men and lorries were speedily dispatched to France.

As soon as the work of enlistment at Avonmouth was organised an Army Service Corps officer was placed in charge, releasing Major Carr to return to headquarters in Bristol and supervise the work at Colston Street, Old Market Street and Avonmouth. This work continued at high pressure practically night and day for a time.

On August 13th, 1914, the Recruiting Office at the Colston Hall was opened, and a staff of clerks and voluntary assistants was forthwith chosen, and the work of raising what became popularly known as the "Kitchener Army" was in a very short time in full swing.

The late Sir Barclay J. Baron volunteered to organise the medical services and to obtain the assistance of practitioners for the purpose of examining recruits, who were presenting themselves in large numbers. Arrangements were soon made for ten or twelve doctors to be present daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. As might be supposed, there was a shortage of all kinds of supplies—weighing machines, stationery, enlistment forms, and so forth—but owing to the hearty co-operation of citizens generally with the Recruiting Committee all supplies were obtained without loss of time.

No record of recruiting in Bristol would be complete that did not express the strongest possible appreciation of the part played by the Boy Scouts' Association. Immediately the Committee started their work at the Colston Hall scoutmasters and boys were there to render assistance. They continued their work during the whole period of the War.



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In the course of a few days the first rush of recruits had been dealt with, and it then became evident that steps would have to be taken to keep up the wave of patriotism if a steady flow of recruits was to be maintained.

The Committee decided to invite the various political agents to assist them in the carrying out of the campaign of meetings, and in consultation with the Recruiting Committee arrangements were made for holding meetings in various parts of the Recruiting Area. Selected speakers accompanied members of the Committee to various parts of the city in motor-cars lent by private owners. Meanwhile posters were being issued by the War Office, and the Recruiting Committee formed a special Sub-Committee to develop an extensive advertising scheme. The combined result of the meetings and advertisements, assisted in no small degree by the co-operation of the local Press, brought forth recruits in growing numbers. Up to August 20th 323 recruits had been enlisted for the new Kitchener Army, irrespective of course of those who had been mobilised, such as reservists, territorials, and those who had joined the Regular Army. This total was raised steadily and reached 1,000 on August 26th, and on September 2nd there was a total of 2,747. On the previous day there were posted to the Colours no fewer than 440 men. Telegrams were received every few minutes to say one corps was closed, that another was open for further recruits, and so forth, and the difficulty was to keep clearly in view to what direction the flow of recruits might be directed.

Relieved of the responsibility for the medical arrangements, the Committee were left free to deal with the organisation of all necessary clerks, services of motor-cars, refreshment for recruits, many of whom attended at the Colston Hall hungry and without money to purchase food, and with little likelihood of obtaining food when they reached their destination, owing to the Commissariat Department being overtaxed and disorganised.

The financial side was not devoid of anxiety, and although promises were made that certain expenses would be met by public funds, it was felt that the Committee must take the initiative, and must not be hindered in their work by any uncertainty on the question of finance. At first a Guarantee



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Fund of £600 was raised and subsequently called up. Next an appeal was issued to the citizens by the Lord Mayor for a Recruiting Fund, which resulted in nearly £4,000 being subscribed.

Representations were made to the Committee that many of those who were volunteering for service were desirous of joining a special battalion composed of Bristol men, and on application to the War Office authority was granted for raising the 12th Service Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment, which became known as "Bristol's Own." Recruiting for this regiment commenced on September 3rd, 1914, and Colonel Burges was appointed to take command. It was consequently arranged that Major Carr should take over the duties of Recruiting Officer for both the New Army and the Regular Army, and that all the work should be concentrated at the Colston Hall. Recruits for "Bristol's Own" were rapidly forthcoming in good numbers, and the Committee represented to the War Office the desirability of securing as barracks "The White City" at Ashton Gate, which had been erected early in the year for the purpose of an Exhibition that the war had brought to an untimely end. The property was then acquired by the War Office, and in a short time the battalion made Ashton Gate their headquarters, where they remained until they left Bristol for their final training before proceeding oversea. "The White City" afforded excellent accommodation, as not only was there but little alteration necessary to furnish battalion offices, officers' quarters, and officers' mess, but also good sleeping accommodation for the men, with plenty of room for messing and a large building which provided a covered drill shed. Bedminster Park was also available, and the headquarters of the battalion were quite close to Ashton Park, which was readily placed at the disposal of the battalion for training purposes. It may not be out of place to mention that upon the Recruiting Committee was thrown the responsibility not only of securing the recruits for this Bristol battalion, but also of sheltering and equipping the men, to say nothing of having to select those willing to act as officers, and recommend them to the War Office for commissions. It may be imagined when there was a general shortage of equipment and outfit that it was no small task to provide the



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clothing for the regiment and the multitudinous other articles which were necessary to complete their outfit, blankets in particular being most difficult to secure.

It is interesting to recall that at this time the War Office allowance for messing was 1s. 9d. per man per day, but it was soon found that a considerable saving could be made by the battalion doing their own catering. Consequently arrangements were made for the procuring of stores and carrying out of the whole of the work by the men of the battalion, with the result that the cost was first brought down to 1s. 3d. per head, and continued to fall until it ultimately reached something between 11d. and 1s. per man per day.

It was realised by the Military Authorities that what could be done by the Bristol battalion could be done elsewhere, and fresh instructions were consequently issued which resulted in a very great saving of public money.

The number of recruits presenting themselves daily became more limited by the middle of September, and with the organisation which had now been placed on a satisfactory basis it was found possible to continue the work in less extensive premises than the Colston Hall. Moreover the War Office considered it desirable to make a move on account of the heavy cost of renting the premises. A transfer was therefore made to the Guildhall, and the work was carried on there up to November, 1915, when owing to the introduction of the Derby Scheme it was necessary to again establish the Recruiting Office at the Colston Hall. During the time the recruiting was carried on at the Guildhall the efforts of the Recruiting Committee had to be correspondingly increased as the flow of recruits became reduced. The 15th Gloucesters, the Depot Battalion of "Bristol's Own," were quartered at Sutton Coldfield, and furnished from time to time recruiting parties to assist the Committee. Authority was granted for raising a Recruiting Band, which was trained to a high pitch of efficiency, and was utilised for meetings, parading the streets, and also for touring with the recruiting party of the 15th Gloucesters throughout the county. Schemes were put on foot for visiting the villages with a view to inducing every man of military age who could be spared to join the fighting forces. However, by the middle of the summer of 1915 it became apparent that if the



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war was likely to continue for any length of time, it would be necessary to ascertain the man power of the country remaining in civil life. Arrangements were therefore made that on August 15th, 1915, a Register of all those over 16 years of age should be compiled, and as soon as these particulars could be sorted a Military Register was compiled of all men from 18 up to 40, and this formed the basis upon which ultimately the first Military Service Act was administered.

It was hoped, however, in some quarters that the voluntary system might still provide all the man power that was necessary, and to give the voluntary system a final trial Lord Derby introduced his scheme of voluntary attesting, the men joining their groups according to ages and according to whether they were single or married, with a view to the younger men being called up first, and so on through successive groups. A part of the scheme was that all those who voluntarily attested were promised the right of appeal to a tribunal, in order that they might state their case and leave it to the tribunal to decide whether in their opinion it was more urgent in the national interests that the men should remain in civil life or serve with His Majesty's Forces. There were various points of uncertainty in the scheme, but these were gradually cleared up, with the result that a very large proportion of the men of military age remaining in civil life attested. It was also part of the scheme that every man on the Military Register should be personally canvassed, but owing to the number who had already joined the Forces, and the pressure of work on all those remaining in civil life, this became an almost impossible task. The Bristol Citizens' Recruiting Committee struck out a line for themselves, and invited by advertisement those men of military age to attend at the Colston Hall and be interviewed rather than that the canvassers should call upon them, as by so doing they would be interviewed by those who had carefully studied the scheme, and could give reliable information, and on any point of doubt could refer to the Recruiting Officer. The system worked admirably, and the facilities so granted were taken advantage of by very large numbers. Aldermen, magistrates, in fact leading citizens generally, were willing to take their share of a rota, so that there were interviewers in attendance at the Colston Hall from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily,



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and with great disregard for their own convenience they readily gave their time and assistance to carry through the work. It was gratifying to the Committee that their scheme commended itself to the Southern Command (who advised other localities to follow Bristol's example), and subsequently the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee issued a notice throughout the country giving details of the Bristol scheme. A considerable number of those who visited the interviewers came to the conclusion that they would join the Army forthwith, with the result that the numbers steadily grew, and on November 1st matters were so congested at the Guildhall that a complete move was made to the Colston Hall, this being carried out during one night, so that next morning work was in full swing by 9 a.m. The recruiting staff and the staff of the Recruiting Committee, which had already been reinforced by a party of the 15th Gloucesters, was supplemented by a further draft. It had been originally intended to close this scheme on Saturday, December 4th, but a week's extension was given to Saturday, December 11th, and in some districts those who wished to attest formed such vast crowds that they could not be dealt with on this Saturday, and consequently the scheme was kept open until midnight of Sunday, December 12th. The greatest number attested on any one day was over 5,600, which, as far as can be ascertained, formed a national record for one centre.

Voluntary helpers were forthcoming in large numbers, and on the Friday and Saturday, December 10th and 11th, there must have been over 500 such helpers. The Committee felt that something more than verbal thanks should be expressed to those who had assisted in the great recruiting boom, and a special letter of thanks was distributed to those who had rendered assistance. A copy of this letter and a list of the recipients is bound in the Minute Book of the Recruiting Committee, which is deposited in the Bristol Room at the Central Library, College Green.

The voluntary system of recruiting having failed, as already stated, to produce the number of men required for the Navy and Army, Lord Derby's scheme was introduced in the autumn of 1915. It provided, *inter alia*, for the creation of Local and Appeal Tribunals. The first five members of the Bristol Local



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Tribunal were appointed by the City Council on November 9th, 1915. At the opening meeting of the Tribunal Alderman Swaish, who had just retired from the office of Lord Mayor, was unanimously elected Chairman, and he held that responsible position through the strenuous four years that followed, inspiring confidence and untiring energy in his colleagues.

In January, 1916, the Tribunal commenced work in earnest. The Derby groups were called to the Colours in quick succession, and before the end of the month the first Military Service Act appeared on the Statute Book. By this measure all single men between the ages of 18 and 41 years were deemed to have been transferred to the Army Reserve, subject to call to the Colours in classes corresponding to the groups of voluntarily attested men, and the right of making claims to Local Tribunals for exemption from military service. From this time the work of the Tribunal became more arduous. A large number of the men who had not voluntarily attested had strong grounds for claiming exemption on domestic, personal, or medical grounds. Moreover, there were a number of men who objected to military service on conscientious grounds, and their cases were amongst the most difficult with which the Tribunal had to deal. The number of men secured for the Forces still proved insufficient, and in June, 1916, a further Act was passed extending the obligation to military service to married men under the age of 41 years.

The course of events on the various battle fronts necessitated frequent changes of policy. Regulations, instructions, certified lists of essential civil occupations were issued, amended or cancelled in such quick succession that as the months passed the members of the Tribunal were almost overwhelmed by the multitude of details to which they were directed to have regard in dealing with the cases which came before them. By the spring of 1917 the claims for exemption had been well sifted, but the needs of the Army were still unsatisfied. The Military Service (Review of Exceptions) Act was passed in April of that year. Under the provisions of this Act men who had been discharged from the Forces of the Crown, or rejected for enlistment on the ground of ill-health or disablement, were required to submit themselves for re-examination. This measure caused grave misgivings throughout the country,



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in view of the number of previously rejected men now certified by Medical Boards to be fit for service. The Bristol Local Tribunal made several representations with regard to medical categories assigned to men rendered liable for service by this Act. The question was taken up by Parliament, and the system of recruiting was eventually transferred from the control of the Army Council to a Civil Department styled the Ministry of National Service. Civilian Medical Boards were set up, and the Review of Exceptions Act was repealed. As the war continued and industries were depleted of labour, the Tribunal were required to give very careful consideration to many important questions affecting the well-being of the civil population.

The production and speedy handling of food-stuffs had to be safeguarded; arrangements had to be made to organise transport for the coal trade; regard had to be paid to the maintenance of the necessary output of boots and shoes for civil and military purposes; much thought had to be given to the position of other industries, trades and businesses in the city, which were carried on under the most difficult conditions. The Tribunal were required to use much care in the exercise of their discretion to impose or waive conditions that men should serve in the local Volunteer Force, the Special Constabulary, or undertake part-time work of national importance.

The members of the Local Tribunal were continually reminded of the great hardship borne by thousands of their fellow-citizens in consequence of joining the Colours, and at the final meeting of the Tribunal, held after the cessation of hostilities, they expressed much admiration for the noble spirit with which the men of Bristol had responded to the call of their country.

Throughout the entire proceedings the Tribunal worked in complete harmony with Major Carr, the Area Recruiting Officer, and the closest co-operation existed between the members and the Military Representatives who sat with them. The Bristol Tribunal held 821 sessions, and dealt with more than 41,000 cases, relating to about 22,000 men, of whom 17,000 were refused exemption. There were in the Bristol Recruiting Area five Tribunals, namely: Bristol, Chipping Sodbury, Kingswood, Thornbury and Warmley. The four outlying



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Tribunals met at frequent intervals—speaking generally once a week—to dispose of their cases, but the bulk of the work fell upon Bristol. The membership of the Local Tribunal increased as the work grew, until the original five were raised to twenty-two.

In addition to Local Tribunals, the Military Service Act, 1916, provided for the appointment by His Majesty the King of Appeal Tribunals for districts throughout the country, to settle appeals against decisions of Local Tribunals. An Appeal Tribunal for the County of Gloucestershire was appointed in February, 1916. The Bristol and Thornbury Division Appeal Tribunal sat in two panels, one of which was presided over by Alderman Edward Parsons and the other by Mr. C. E. Barry. The Appeal Tribunal had power to vary or confirm decisions of Local Tribunals, and could grant or withhold, at their discretion, leave to appeal further to the Central Tribunal in London. The Tribunal dealt with appeals by or in respect of men resident or employed in the city of Bristol, the Urban District of Kingswood, and the Rural Districts of Chipping Sodbury, Thornbury and Warmley. Owing to the large area which came under the jurisdiction of the Tribunal the cases were very varied, and as there could be no further appeal except by leave, very careful judgment was required in arriving at decisions.

Many of the appeals related to the retention of men engaged in agriculture, and these cases presented great difficulty, owing to the fact that the majority were in respect of young men, physically fit for war service, and yet oftentimes essential to the production of food for the civil population.

The Appeal Tribunal had grave doubts at times as to the fitness of men for the grade of military service assigned to them, and in many cases they requested the Recruiting Medical Board to examine men further. In November, 1917, a scheme was introduced which permitted men who were dissatisfied with their medical grading to apply to the Appeal Tribunal for leave to be re-examined by a Board of Medical Assessors in London. A large number of applications were received, supported by certificates from private doctors, and these cases received most careful consideration.

The Appeal Tribunal held 258 meetings, and dealt with 8,000 cases, 732 of which were applications for medical re-examination.



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At the conclusion of the Armistice 683 certificates issued by the Tribunal were in force. The Appeal Tribunal gave leave for 180 cases to be referred to the Central Tribunal, and the decisions of the Appeal Tribunal were upheld in 106 cases.

Throughout the entire proceedings the members of the Tribunal and the Military and National Service representatives worked together harmoniously; and at the last meeting of the Tribunal, held on November 20th, 1918, the Chairman paid a warm tribute to the Military and National Service Representatives for the fair manner in which they, as parties to all appeals, had conducted their cases.

In order to watch the interests of the military authorities, Military Representatives were nominated to attend sittings of the Tribunals. Several local gentlemen allowed themselves to be nominated to act as Military Representatives at the inauguration of the system, but in the Bristol Recruiting Area permanent Military Representatives were continuously employed, and it is a matter of interest to note that towards the end of the war, namely in 1918, the Ministry of National Service, which was then dealing with recruiting, decided to employ nobody before Tribunals other than permanent officials. From the first the Bristol Recruiting Authorities felt that the work was so onerous, and that it was so important to secure as far as possible uniformity of procedure, that it was essential to have fully qualified Military Representatives, and it would no doubt be admitted by the Tribunals that the representatives who appeared before them in this locality did their utmost to render the work of the Tribunals as little unpleasant as possible, and co-operated to the greatest extent in performing an invidious task with the minimum of hardship and friction.

By this time Colonel Burges had handed over the command of the 12th Gloucesters to Lt.-Col. M. Archer Shee, M.P., and application was therefore made for the post of Chief Military Representative to be offered to Colonel Burges. This proposal was sanctioned, and the smoothness with which the Tribunal Scheme worked throughout the Bristol Recruiting Area was in no small measure due to his unflinching tact and courtesy.

It is now necessary to revert to the various local units. The 12th Gloucesters were in training at Ashton Gate,



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and in view of the urgent necessity for more recruits under the voluntary system, the Recruiting Committee expressed to the War Office their readiness to endeavour to raise a heavy battery, particularly having in mind that some of the police were being released for military service, and would be such excellent recruits for this branch of the Army. Accordingly early in February, 1915, authority was issued and the Committee proceeded to form the 127th Bristol Heavy Battery, R.G.A., nominating Major H. W. K. Wait as Commanding Officer, and with the appointments of Sergeant-Major and Quartermaster-Sergeant the battery were soon something more than a name. Arrangements were made that a part of "The White City" should be converted into sleeping and messing quarters for the battery. This was known as "Bostocks," not on account of the purpose for which it was actually to be used, but because of the purpose for which it was originally designed.

At a meeting of the Committee on April 8th a letter was read from the War Office expressing the Army Council's appreciation of the assistance rendered by municipalities, Committees and others in raising local units, and suggesting that further units might be raised on similar lines. The Committee decided that an endeavour should be made to raise a Bantam Battalion, provided arrangements could be made whereby co-operation might be secured from the whole of the West of England, and authority was accordingly issued to recruit from the whole of the Southern Command. Major Carr was invited to take command, and agreed to do so. During the early days of recruiting for this battalion there were quartered at "The White City" the 12th Gloucesters and the 127th Heavy Battery and the Bantams. When the housing accommodation became overtaxed, it was necessary to resort to canvas, and tents were accordingly erected in the open spaces available within the barracks. Whilst these afforded temporary accommodation it was not altogether satisfactory, as with the dry weather and the number of men coming and going the result was a great quantity of dust which permeated everything. This state of affairs improved when the 12th Gloucesters left and the Bantam Battalion took over their accommodation.

By this time it was found that the 127th Heavy Battery



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had become full and there was a waiting list ; the War Office was asked to sanction recruiting over-strength or to authorise a further battery, and in April this authority was granted, Major (afterwards Lieut.-Colonel) Evelyn Aldridge being appointed as Commanding Officer. It was found practicable by re-arrangement of the quarters occupied by the 127th Battery to accommodate the second heavy battery, namely the 129th, and this battery was also quickly brought to full strength. During all these arrangements Bristol became very much of a military centre. Horfield Barracks were the headquarters of the Gloucestershire Regiment, and "The White City" was the headquarters of the local units, and there were the various territorial units with their headquarters in the city, viz. :—

4th Gloucesters.

6th Gloucesters.

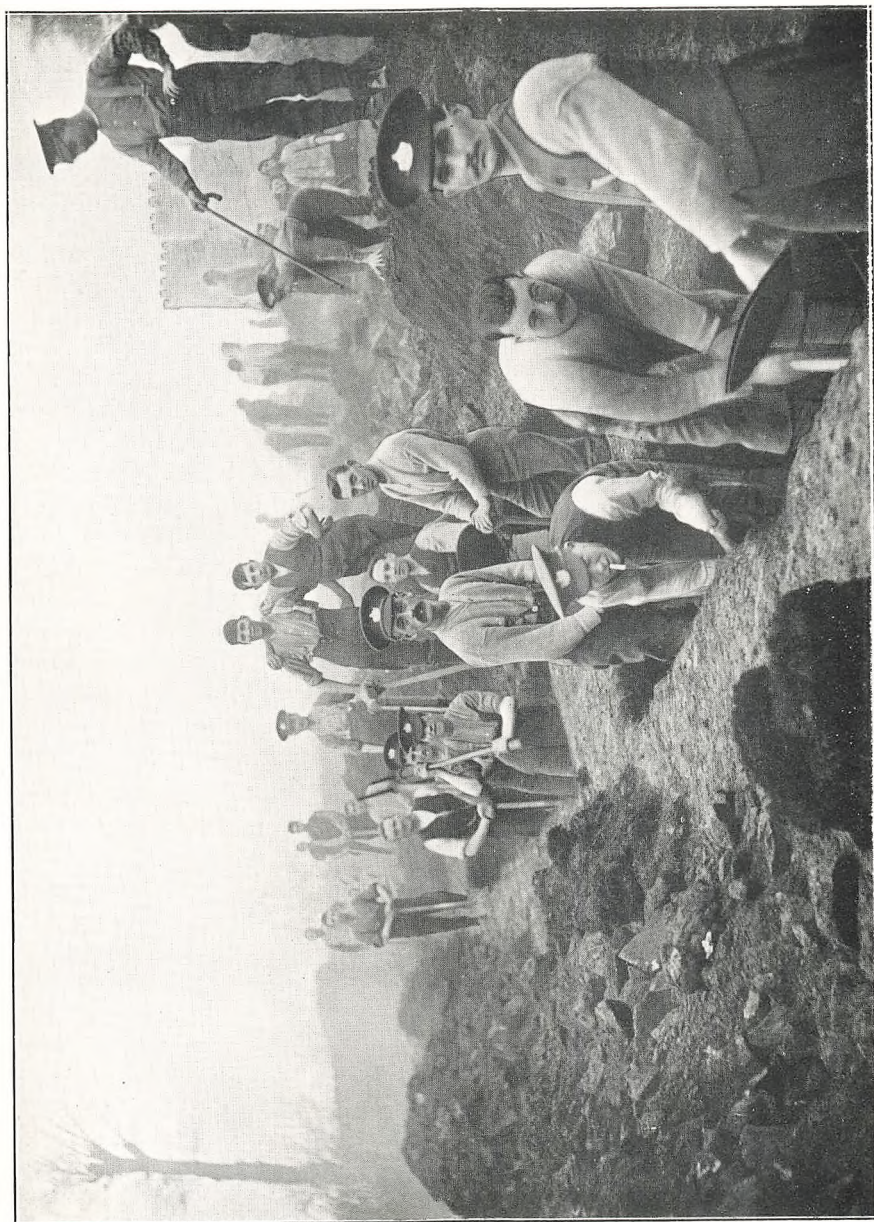
South Midland Royal Engineers.

South Midland Royal Field Artillery (Brigade).

South Midland Field Ambulance (Third).

During the period of voluntary recruiting each of these units were responsible for making their own arrangements for recruiting, which led to some friendly rivalry between the recruiting authorities anxious to show who could obtain the best results. This rivalry undoubtedly had the effect of maintaining the energies of all alike at a high pitch, with the result that by the time the Military Service Act was passed there were very few young men remaining who were not employed on work of considerable importance. With the introduction, however, of the Tribunal System, questions of personal hardship and business responsibility had to a great extent to be placed in the background, and the great test question for a man remaining in civil life or joining H.M. Forces was which of these alternatives was more essential in the national interest. The application of this principle had the effect in the later stages of giving rise to a considerable amount of dissatisfaction in consequence of the number of comparatively young men who were employed on munitions, whilst older men, and those less physically fit, were demanded for Military Service. This trouble became most acute in the summer of 1915, when it was evident that one of the dominating features of the war was the question of munitions and keeping the Forces supplied with the





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TRENCH DIGGING ON BRANDON HILL, BRISTOL.







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many and varied requirements of modern warfare. As occupant of the new post of Minister of Munitions the Right Hon. David Lloyd George made a personal tour of the country. He held meetings in Bristol, at which he explained to employers and workmen the vital necessity of organising works which were capable of manufacturing munitions, and also of obtaining and equipping new factories for this purpose. Then began the transfer of skilled labour from civil work to work on munitions. The men and boys were told that they would be serving their country as well by doing this as by fighting in the Forces, and owing to a Government campaign throughout the country the necessary labour was to a great extent forthcoming. When, therefore, the Military Service Acts were introduced these young men were protected by badges, and that protection was strongly commented upon by those who knew of men with business, family, or other ties who had to join the Forces, whilst younger men with no such ties were required to remain at home. Similarly, large numbers of men had to be kept in the coal mines and at the dockyards, and there were continual complaints in the Press that at certain centres thousands of able-bodied young men could be seen daily going into and coming out of the dockyards. The reply to such comment was of course obvious. Certain shipping construction and repairs were of vital necessity, and there was always the underlying probability of a great naval action, which might have tested to the utmost the resources of the naval repairing workshops; and the Government would have had a very unenviable time at the hands of the British public had this happened and the authorities been found wanting.

Recruiting during this period resolved itself into the supply of men forthcoming from the Derby Scheme or the Military Service Acts, chiefly after the cases had been adjudicated upon by the Tribunal. There was, however, a constant flow of recruits who joined without appeal when their groups or classes were called up, and it was the constant endeavour of the recruiting authorities to assist in the reorganisation of various trades so that it became less imperative to retain in civil employ men so urgently required in the fighting Forces. In addition to reorganisation, efforts were also made to release men for service by dilution or substitution, the source of supply being



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those men unsuitable for Military Service (either by age or physique) or female labour. As an example may be mentioned the boot trade in the Bristol district, which yielded a very large number of men for H.M. Forces.

An elaborate scheme was worked out for reorganising the bakery trade, as it was essential, whilst securing every available man for Military Service, that the feeding of Bristol and district as regards bread should not be jeopardised. A special Committee was formed and rendered the greatest possible assistance, carrying out the principle—the need for which had from the earliest days of the war become so apparent—that upon the various localities and trades themselves rested the burden of supplying the men.

In this way matters progressed during the remainder of 1916, and during the first part of 1917, when from certain sources the work of recruiting under the War Office was severely criticised. There had grown up lack of confidence in the work of the Army Medical Recruiting Boards, lack of confidence in the Tribunals, lack of confidence in the local officials, and last, but by no means least, lack of confidence by those responsible for recruiting at the War Office, with the result that the military side requested the civil side to take over the work, and let the local authorities accept the responsibility of finding the men for the armed forces. Accordingly the work was handed over to an entirely new Administration, and Sir Auckland Geddes was called upon to form a Ministry of National Service, to take over on a civilian basis the entire work of recruiting, Medical Boards, and the organising of the man power of the country.

It will here be a suitable place to interpose a short summary of the work carried out under the style of National Service. In February, 1917, the first National Service Department was organised, and Mr. Neville Chamberlain, who was then Lord Mayor of Birmingham, was asked to take over the work, which invitation he accepted, resigning his Lord Mayoralty with a view to devoting the whole of his time and energy to the scheme. In order to carry out his proposals in Bristol and district, a National Service Committee was appointed on February 19th, 1917, by the City Council, under the Chairmanship of the then Lord Mayor of Bristol, the late Alderman Sir Barclay J. Baron, with the result that Bristol



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contributed a large proportion towards the total number of volunteers secured throughout the country. A large number of men offered their services voluntarily for agricultural work, and about one thousand acres of land were cultivated in the Bristol area. No wages were paid to these volunteers, but the farmer was charged fourpence per hour, which helped to pay the cost of transportation, etc. Many of the leading firms in the city gave their men a whole day's holiday on Saturdays to participate in this work, paying them full wages. About two hundred boys from the Bristol Grammar School rendered good service in the hay-making season, giving up their summer holidays for this purpose. As a house to house canvass was not practicable, a letter signed by the Lord Mayor, with an enrolment form, was sent to every man in the city, the addressing of the envelopes for this purpose being undertaken voluntarily by ladies. For a period some members of the National Service Committee were in attendance each evening from 5 o'clock to 9 o'clock at the Employment Exchange, to render assistance and give advice to those men who came to fill up the enrolment forms. Meetings were also held in the wards of the city, and by the courtesy of the proprietors National Service films were shown on the screens of six of the principal cinema theatres in the city, members of the National Service Committee attending each performance to address the audience on the subject. Although the Committee did everything in their power to make the scheme workable, at the end of six months they came to the unanimous decision that it was impracticable, and resigned in a body on July 6th, 1917, Mr. Neville Chamberlain resigning his position as Minister of National Service the following week.

Here again Bristol did its utmost to co-operate in this work, which was hoped would help materially the national project of winning the war, many of our leading citizens not only being on the Committee, but doing strenuous work during long hours and co-operating with the work of Mr. W. Leonard Olive, who acted as Honorary Secretary.

This scheme failed, and the machinery which had been set up was taken over and amalgamated with the recruiting machinery under the direction of the Right Hon. Sir Auckland Geddes, K.C.B., M.P. It has been suggested that the true reason for the failure of the first scheme was that its



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chief object was to enrol as many members of the community as possible for work of national importance, and the supply far exceeded the demand for such workers. There was undoubtedly the work to be done, but employers generally were unwilling to employ those who had little or no knowledge of their particular work, and part-timers were, in a great majority of cases, quite unsuited for it. In support of this argument may be mentioned the fact that the second Ministry of National Service in practically all their schemes were careful to ascertain the demand for labour before embarking on the work of diverting or drafting labour into the channels in which it was most urgently needed.

The new Ministry of National Service came into being at the beginning of November, 1917, and took over from the War Office recruiting and its allied work, the organisation being briefly as follows :—

(1) The Minister, who was a member of the War Cabinet, and who became responsible for the organising of the man power of the whole country. The Ministry with headquarters at Hotel Windsor, Westminster, was divided into various departments, such as medical, recruiting, labour, trade exemptions, statistical, administration, etc., and each of these departments was administered by a head, and these heads collectively formed the Council of the Ministry of National Service, who were, in addition to regular and frequent conference, kept in the closest possible touch with one another to co-operate in carrying into effect the decision of the War Cabinet.

(2) The country was divided into regions, and in effect they took over from the various Military Commands the whole work of recruiting similarly to the arrangements which had been completed between the War Office and the Ministry. Thus the recruiting work passed from the Southern Command to the South-Western Region, which established its headquarters at 5a Union Street, Bristol, and administered the whole of recruiting and National Service work throughout the West of England from Gloucestershire to Land's End, and eastwards to Hampshire. Mr. R. B. Hughes Buller, C.I.E., was Director for the Region.

In effect, therefore, the local work was continued with little change of personnel, those who had left military rank in



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recruiting carrying on their duties as civilians. Great care was bestowed on the efficiency of the Medical Boards and also on all connected with Tribunal work ; but too much praise cannot be given to the statistical work of the Ministry, which enabled all connected with the work of recruiting to know the man power available, not only according to age but also according to medical category

The Bristol Recruiting Office, which had been in Narrow Wine Street since removal from the Colston Hall in August, 1916, had become inadequate, and the Libraries Committee of the Corporation agreed to the proposition of the Ministry of National Service to allow the Recruiting Office to be accommodated at the Central Library, the Medical Board being housed at Hamilton Rooms, Park Street. This proved a very great improvement, and it was freely stated by those qualified to give an opinion that there was no finer recruiting establishment in the country.

It is well remembered that the country passed through the most anxious time of the whole war in the few ensuing months, and on March 13th, 1918, Sir Auckland Geddes visited Bristol, and in a notable speech at the Bristol Liberal Club told the public for the first time how grave was the outlook. Sir Auckland subsequently elaborated his speech to the members of the Recruiting Committee, who had been called together at the Council House to meet him. Afterwards Sir Auckland saw the various officials of the Ministry in the South-Western Region, and the members of the Appeal and Local Tribunals.

The forecast by Sir Auckland Geddes was borne out fully, but the blacker the news the greater was the response of the nation in recruits for the Army and work at home ; so that as the summer of 1918 wore on the news became brighter, and the extreme pressure for every available man was somewhat relaxed, but not until a large number of men of the new military age had been enrolled, the second Military Service Act having come into force extending the age of liability for service to all men who had not attained the age of 51 on August 14th, 1915. The course of the Ministry ran as normally and as well as such organisations can do with a colossal war in progress, and when the Armistice was signed on November 11th, 1918, it was at once decided to disband the Ministry with all dispatch, and by



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the end of the year most of the leading officials had given up their duties and the staff became a mere skeleton, just sufficient to carry on and administer the few duties which necessarily remained. At Bristol the regional staff promptly disappeared, and the Recruiting Office as such was closed.

A few of the many interesting incidents in connection with the work of the Recruiting Committee may be described :—

(1) The Lord Mayor's Christmas Fund for troops may not be generally known, but the Lord Mayor of Bristol for the time being is *ex-officio* Honorary Colonel of the 4th Gloucesters, and in 1916 the Lord Mayor (Alderman Swaish) was desirous of sending some recognition not only to the battalion of which he was Honorary Colonel, but to all local units and those connected with Bristol. Accordingly a public fund was raised, and the Recruiting Committee were asked to undertake the detail work in connection with the scheme. Dark blue enamel tobacco tins were selected with the city arms on the lid. These tins contained a pipe, tobacco, and cigarette papers. The various Commanding Officers have since testified as to the value attached by the recipients to these boxes, the majority of which the men sent home for safe custody. A similar fund was raised in Christmas, 1917, and Christmas, 1918, and on these two occasions cheques were sent to the Commanding Officers to be applied to the Canteen Fund of the various units for supplementing the Christmas festivities of the various troops.

(2) It may be of interest to recall a unique procession which took place through the city on Whit-Monday, 1915. The procession was formed in Queen Square, comprising the representatives of all the troops in Bristol and also of the Cadet Corps and similar organisations. The opportunity was taken to turn the affair into a recruiting meeting, and four eminent Members of Parliament addressed the crowds from the platforms specially erected on the Downs. A tent was provided for the purpose of enrolling recruits. There was a march past, and the G.O.C. Southern Command took the salute.

(3) The 12th (Service) Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment ("Bristol's Own") left Bristol for their divisional training before going over sea, and proceeded to Wensley Dale on June 23rd, 1915.

(4) Prior to the introduction of the Derby Scheme an effort was made to raise enthusiasm throughout the country in



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respect of voluntary recruiting, and recruiting rallies were held through the whole land. In Bristol they took the form of various meetings, which culminated in a tattoo by the massed bands of the Bantam Brigade, including the band of the 14th Gloucesters (West of England Bantams). A huge square was kept on the Downs, and large numbers of men stepped within the enclosure to volunteer for service, and were conveyed in taxi-cabs to the headquarters of the Territorial Force for the purpose of enlistment.

(5) It is gratifying to record that the 12th Gloucesters came out top of the New Army for shooting, with an average of 79.4 per cent., and had the best shot in the New Army, viz. Sergeant Bailey, afterwards Regimental-Sergeant-Major of the Bristol Battalion.

(6) The Recruiting Committee took the keenest possible interest in the welfare of the various Comforts Committees which were raised in connection with the local units, and from time to time made such grants from their funds as circumstances and their balance permitted.

(7) Without wishing to enumerate all the innovations introduced by the Recruiting Committee, there is one which merits special mention, and that is what is generally known as the Bargain Department. When the Tribunal system came into operation, it quickly became apparent to the Committee that it would cause employers of labour endless trouble if they had to be continually applying to the Tribunals for exemption of this man or that man as and when the men's particular groups were called up, and forms were therefore prepared on which the firms could make a return of all their employees of military age, and could then make a bargain with the Recruiting Authorities whereby some men might be released for immediate service, some after an agreed period of time, and others should be exempted until the lists were again reconsidered at a later date. This system was almost confined to Bristol, and worked most smoothly. At a later date an Army Council instruction was issued stipulating that no bargains could be made without the consent of the Tribunal, and it was gratifying to the Committee to find that on the various bargains that had been made in the past being submitted to the Tribunal there was not a single case in which the bargain



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was not approved. The system was thenceforward adopted of bargains being completed and placed before the Tribunal for formal sanction. In addition to the importance of saving employers as much trouble and detail as possible, the plan also had the effect of saving the time of the Tribunal, and of saving the length of time which would necessarily have ensued before men could have been obtained for Military Service had the work of the Tribunals become congested, as it did in many other parts of the country.

(8) The Committee of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery have been asked to accept various gifts connected with the war from the Recruiting Committee. Among these should be mentioned four Company flags which were presented to the 12th Gloucesters ("Bristol's Own") by the officer commanding their division, recording special feats of arms performed by the battalion, also a large drum which was the property of the 15th Gloucesters, the Depot Battalion of "Bristol's Own." The Museum and Art Gallery Committee have accepted a bronze tablet which has been erected in the Art Gallery bearing this wording:—

This Tablet is placed here to record for all time the following Naval and Military Units that were associated with the City of Bristol during the Great War of 1914-1918:—

Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, Bristol Division.			
Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, Yeomanry.			
127th Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery, New Army.			
129th Heavy Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery, New Army.			
South Midland Royal Field Artillery, Territorial Force.			
South Midland Royal Engineers, Territorial Force.			
1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment.			
2nd	"	"	"
3rd	"	"	"
4th	"	"	"
5th	"	"	"
6th	"	"	"
7th	"	"	"
8th	"	"	"
9th	"	"	"
10th	"	"	"
11th	"	"	"
12th	"	"	"
13th	"	"	"

Special Reserve.

Territorial Force.

"

"

New Army.

"

"

Reserve.

Bristol Batt.

(Forest of Dean), New Army, Pioneer Batt.



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14th Battalion	Gloucestershire	Regiment	New Army, West of England Battalion ("Bantams")
15th	"	"	New Army Reserve.
16th	"	"	"
17th	"	"	Territorial Force (Reserve).
18th	"	"	New Army.
3rd South Midland Field Ambulance, R.A.M.C. (Territorial Force)			
The National Reserve (Bristol Division).			

Total number of men enlisted from the Bristol Area for H.M. Services during the War was about 55,000.

The Bristol Citizens' Recruiting Committee were formed in August, 1914, and through their instrumentality a continuous flow of Recruits was maintained for the above Units as well as for the North Somerset Yeomanry and Prince Albert's Somerset Light Infantry; and in particular they were responsible for the four following Units which were raised under their direct initiative:—

### *First Commanding Officer.*

127th Heavy Battery, R.G.A.	..	Major H. W. K. Wait.
129th Heavy Battery, R.G.A.	..	Major E. Aldridge.
12th Batt. Gloucestershire Regt., ("Bristol's Own")	.. .. .	Colonel W. E. P. Burges.
14th Batt. Gloucestershire Regt., West of England Battalion, ("Bantams")	.. .. .	Major John Carr.

### *Chairman of Committee.*

Alderman John Swaish	.. .. .	Lord Mayor	1913-1915
Sir Barclay J. Baron, Kt.	.. .. .	"	1915-1917
Alderman Frank Sheppard	.. .. .	"	1917-1918
Alderman H. W. Twiggs	.. .. .	"	1918-1919

### *Acting Chairman of Committee.*

Sir Herbert Ashman, Bart.	.. .. .	1914-1915
Sir Joseph Weston-Stevens, Kt.	.. .. .	1915-1917
Alderman J. Fuller Eberle	.. .. .	1917-1919

A. H. Riseley, Hon. Sec. 1914-1919.

(9) A framed Illuminated Address to commemorate the reception which was given by the Lord Mayor and citizens of Bristol on February 15th, 1919, to those five Bristolians who had won the premier decoration, viz. the Victoria Cross, has also been accepted for the Art Gallery.



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The Recruiting Committee have also invited the Committee of the Art Gallery to accept an Illuminated Address giving the names of the members of the Bristol Citizens' Recruiting Committee, past and present.

(10) At the request of the Lord Mayor, a Reception was organised on February 15th, 1919, of Bristol Officers, N.C.O.'s and Men who had been awarded Naval and Military Decorations during the Great War, August 4th, 1914—November 11th, 1918. The Reception was held at the Colston Hall, Bristol, and General Sir H. C. Sclater, G.C.B., G.B.E., was present at the ceremony and held an investiture. Illuminated addresses and gold watches, suitably inscribed, were presented to the five Bristol V.C.'s, viz. :—

Lieut.-Col. Daniel Burges, V.C., D.S.O., Gloucestershire Regiment.

Capt. Manley Angell James, V.C., M.C.

The Rev. and Mrs. James Ash Parsons, of Redland, Bristol, on behalf of their son, 2nd-Lieut. Hardy Falconer Parsons, late Gloucestershire Regiment.

Sergt. Thomas Edward Rendle, V.C., 1st Batt. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

Lance-Corpl. Frederick G. Room, V.C., Royal Irish Regiment.

There were some 250 Officers, Warrant Officers, N.C.O.'s, and Men who had won Decorations, and to them were presented illuminated cards in commemoration of the occasion. It may be mentioned that the list of those who earned decorations, and which was included in the programme, was not claimed to be a complete list, but a list of those officers and men who sent in their names in response to the advertisements of the Committee. Later in the year Commander C. C. Dobson, D.S.O., son of a Clifton doctor, won the V.C. for a gallant deed off Kronstadt.

(11) There was another function which it was the privilege of the Recruiting Committee to organise, viz. the official reception of the cadre of the 1st Gloucesters on their return from overseas, bringing with them the regimental colours. This took place on Whit-Tuesday, June 10th, 1919. The detachment, in command of Lieut.-Colonel J. L. F. Tweedie, D.S.O., were met



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at the station by the Sheriff, and proceeded to the Council House, where they were received by the Lord Mayor, who welcomed them on behalf of the citizens, and presented an Illuminated Address recording the admiration and gratitude of the citizens for what the regiment had done. Subsequently the men were conveyed to Horfield Barracks, where a luncheon had been arranged by the Recruiting Committee, at which the Lord Mayor, Colonel Koe, C.B.E. (Commanding 2nd Southern Area), Colonel W. E. P. Burges, O.B.E., Lieut.-Colonel Ingram, D.S.O., Major Carr, M.B.E., and others were present.

As a testimony to the unity of purpose of the citizens of Bristol, it may be recorded that no sooner was War declared than arrangements were made between the Conservative and Liberal parties in Bristol to sink all politics, and that each Club should be available for use by the members of the other, and this happy scheme remained in force until long after the signing of the Armistice.

Under the provisions of the National Registration Act, 1915, all persons between the ages of 16 and 65 years resident in the city on the night of August 15th, 1915, were required to furnish on forms left at their addresses various particulars, from which statistics were compiled for the guidance of Government departments in formulating schemes for the prosecution of the war.

A Committee of the City Council were elected to administer the Act in Bristol, Alderman Sir George E. Davies being Chairman. The task of enumerating the population devolved upon the Town Clerk (Mr. E. J. Taylor) and his staff. The distribution, collection and sorting of Registration forms, and the issue of Registration Certificates were loyally undertaken by a large number of voluntary workers.

When compulsory military service was introduced, a duplicate Register was compiled for the Recruiting Authorities, and until the conclusion of the Armistice notification was sent to the Recruiting Office in respect of all additions to or withdrawals from the Register, in respect of men of military age. Owing to the cordial co-operation which existed between the National Registration Department of the Town Clerk's Office and the Area Recruiting Office, both the national and military registers were maintained in a most reliable manner throughout



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the period of the war. When the Register was compiled 218,768 persons were included in it, and the work of keeping it up to date involved dealing with 21,071 subsequent registrations, 32,356 arrivals from other districts, 32,783 enlistments, 16,760 removals from the city, 6,648 deaths, and the withdrawal of 1,800 registrations of persons who had attained the age of 65 years.



## Chapter III

### Care of the Sick and Wounded







## CHAPTER III

### CARE OF THE SICK AND WOUNDED

THE RED CROSS—THE ST. JOHN AMBULANCE CORPS—THE VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENTS—2ND SOUTHERN GENERAL HOSPITAL: BASE AT ROYAL INFIRMARY—SOUTHMEAD—ORTHOPÆDIC CENTRES—THE BEAUFORT WAR HOSPITAL—A HOSPITAL TRAVELLING FUND—SOLDIERS AND SAILORS HELP SOCIETY—NAVAL PRISONERS OF WAR FUND—HOSPITAL SUPPLIES AND COMFORTS FOR TROOPS.

SOME idea of the splendid response which was made by all classes of civilians when the call for voluntary service was made will be gathered from the record of activities in this chapter. The Red Cross Branch was ready immediately with a magnificent base hospital for the 2nd Southern Command. With the Red Cross worked the St. John Ambulance and the Voluntary Aid Detachments. A remarkable and indeed unique supplementary work in connection with the hospitals was the Inquiry Bureau, which forms the subject of the following chapter. Another notable organisation was that of the Women's Working Parties for hospital supplies. Very early in the war a large number of Belgian refugees came to Bristol and were hospitably received by the citizens at large, many of the guests finding happy homes and good employment in our midst. The whole record is one of service eagerly rendered and of a quality that has won for Bristol lasting fame in all the Empire.

#### THE RED CROSS.

The Bristol Branch of the British Red Cross Society had arranged for the use of the Bristol Royal Infirmary as a military base hospital as long ago as December, 1910, and three months later were able to offer the County Territorial Association the new wing of the Infirmary erected at a cost of £137,000 as a memorial of the late King Edward VII. But before the war broke out the responsibility for providing base hospitals



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was assumed by the War Office. That assumption released the Bristol Branch from the undertaking, but on the outbreak of hostilities the Branch, at the request of the County Territorial Association, gladly renewed the offer, and the War Office was thus furnished in Bristol with a magnificent base hospital free of cost within forty-eight hours of the declaration of war. The Red Cross Branch also equipped the hospital for its special purpose, and provided a large proportion of the staff from the Voluntary Aid Detachments. Casualties from the Western Front were taken in immediately. There is a story of one soldier's wife who could hardly believe that her husband had been to France, got wounded and was back in Bristol—a patient at the Infirmary—so short had been his absence from home.

Rapidly the work of the Red Cross in Bristol grew to huge proportions. From the start the meeting of ambulance trains was splendidly organised, and the increasing demands were, as they arose, met with wonderful efficiency. At no other centre were the wounded better cared for than at Bristol, and the reception they met with at Temple Meads Station must have given them an encouraging first impression of the city. The admirably-trained Red Cross and St. John Ambulance men showed unremitting diligence in their efforts, and the convoys of wounded men were always got away from the station with commendable despatch. The Women's Voluntary Aid Detachment, who were always on duty at the station when the trains came in, served refreshments, which were immensely appreciated by the soldiers. The Bristol Branch deserve warm congratulations upon the completeness and success of the organisation. Year by year reports were issued by the Branch containing the story of the twelve months' work, and giving many interesting statistics. The public made a noble response. Donations were made generously by people of every station of life, some giving money and some goods, such as food, clothing, bandages, etc., while a large band of men and women worked late and early under the Hon. Secretary's direction at headquarters, 36 Tyndall's Park Road. Soon after the outbreak of war the Branch started a Prisoners of War Fund for the benefit of the Gloucesters, and, for a time, all Bristol men in any other regiments who were known to be prisoners of war. These parcels undoubtedly saved the lives





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RECEIVING WOUNDED AT TEMPLE MEADS STATION.







## CARE OF THE SICK AND WOUNDED

of many of the men, and earned for Bristol Red Cross gratitude and fame. They contained a great variety of food and comforts, such as biscuits, cheese, sausages, suet pudding, bacon, syrup, soup squares, potted meat, tea, sugar, condensed milk, coffee, cocoa, pork and beans, mixed vegetables, dripping, jam, veal loaf, chocolate, roast beef, mutton, dates, salmon, bovril, groaten, tripe and onions, sweets, herrings, mackerel in sauce, and sardines. Each man was given his choice of tobacco, cigarettes, or chocolate. Large numbers of food parcels sent to Germany by private individuals for the benefit of their captive relatives and friends were stolen by the Huns. Better fortune, however, was experienced with the Red Cross parcels, nearly all of which reached the soldiers to whom they were addressed. Possibly this may be due to the fact that the Huns feared retribution from the Allied Governments if they went too far in their wickedness. But the Austrians apparently had no such misgivings. About eighty of the Bristol men were imprisoned in Austria, and the Austrians stole their parcels wholesale. All the parcels were admirably packed, and the Bristol Red Cross avoided the mistake—made by other centres—of instituting a standard parcel. The contents were carefully varied from time to time, and the requirements of individual men were considered. Of course, the central idea was to convey the maximum amount of nourishment which could be crammed within the limited space available in the boxes. Some parcels despatched from other centres were ill-assorted and ill-packed, but ours were all “shipshape and Bristol fashion.” In each was placed a postcard upon which the recipients could state whether the contents of the parcel were duly received and could report his state of health—it was advisable to keep every possible check upon unscrupulous enemies who were always ready to torture our men if they thought they could do it without risking their own skins.

The Bristol Branch were pioneers in the movement, for they were the first Red Cross organisation to send out such parcels. Mrs. Budgett (who acted as Hon. Secretary of the Branch all through the war) was the leading spirit in the effort, and the first parcel was sent in response to the request of a Bristol man, Private Thomas Furnell, of the 1st Gloucesters, who was taken prisoner at the Battle of Mons. Private Furnell described



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the terrible plight of the prisoners in the hands of a brutal enemy, and said that he was convinced that if Bristol people knew that they were starving and dying, something would be done. Something was done, for despite opposition—there were those who said it was not Red Cross work—the matter was taken in hand with great energy. From that day until the signing of the Armistice there was a steady flow of parcels from the Red Cross Headquarters in Tyndall's Park to suffering Bristol, Gloucestershire and Somerset men captured by cruel foes. Up to December, 1916, parcels were sent to all Bristol men, to whatever unit they may have belonged. At that time there were about 300 recipients of parcels from Bristol. Then the scheme was reorganised, and the parcels from Tyndall's Park went to men of the Gloucesters and to Bristol men belonging to the Somersets. The re-arrangement was effected in consultation with the Central Prisoners of War Committee, the object being to prevent overlapping. Until the end of 1916 the whole of the cost of the Bristol parcels was defrayed out of a special fund to which generous contributions were made. Ultimately the effort settled down on the plan of three parcels a fortnight for each prisoner. Every parcel weighed ten pounds, and at the zenith of the work the expenditure was at the rate of well over £40,000 per annum. There was a tobacco bond for the whole Bristol district, and this was managed by Mr. W. E. Budgett.

At a reception given a year after the Armistice by the Executive Committee of the Branch to the V.A.D.'s, the President, Her Grace the Duchess of Beaufort, in the chair, Mrs. Budgett presented some final figures. The Committee, she said, felt particularly gratified at being able to carry on the work of the Bristol Branch throughout the whole period of the war without having to appeal outside for financial assistance. The public of Bristol had found since the outbreak of war nearly £100,000. From the commencement of the war they had been concerned with no fewer than 173,600 cases. The whole of the detrainng of wounded and sick troops had been carried out without a single mishap. Thirty-six ambulances and cars were owned by the Society at the end, and many private owners and chauffeurs had assisted with transport.



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At the cessation of hostilities there were over 1,100 prisoners of war of the Gloucestershire Regiment, and three food parcels per fortnight had been sent to each man. A band of voluntary collectors brought in over a million eggs and £5,700 in money, which were used for extra comforts for the breakfasts of soldiers in hospitals. Valuable work was also done by lady visitors to the hospitals. The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. H. G. Hill, who took office on the death of the first Hon. Treasurer (Sir George White), stated that from Aug. 4th, 1914, to Oct. 31st, 1919, the Branch received £99,746, made up as follows: donations and subscriptions, £54,872; contributions to the Prisoners of War Fund, £36,874; egg and breakfast money, £6,018; sundry receipts, £1,077; interest on current account, £905. The following were the payments: Equipment of the 2nd Southern General Hospital, £8,085; ambulance equipment, £834; cost of transport, £18,882; catering for wounded at the railway station, £3,639; extra comforts for soldiers in hospital, £14,293; cost of parcels to prisoners of war, £36,071; cost of soldiers' funerals, £2,886; expenses of V.A.D.'s, including uniforms, £921. They had, Mr. Hill added, to reinstate the Red Maids' Hospital, and had set aside a sum, which he was sure would appeal to them all, to erect a suitable and substantial memorial to the men who died in Bristol hospitals. There is a plot of land in Arno's Vale Cemetery which is known as "The Soldiers' Corner," which was provided by the Red Cross. There would at the end be a small sum to form the nucleus of a fund for carrying on the Red Cross in future.

### THE ST. JOHN AMBULANCE CORPS.

The Ambulance Department of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England forms part of the Red Cross organisation of Great Britain, equally with the British Red Cross Society and the St. Andrew's Ambulance Association, and are recognised by the British Government under Article 10 of the Geneva Convention as a Society to assist the medical services in time of war. The No. 2 District of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, of which Bristol is a unit, is composed of eight counties under the charge of the Commissioner, Dr. J. S. Griffiths.

The Bristol Corps of the Brigade were formed in 1891, and at



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the end of the war comprised a total of 1,130 all ranks. At the outbreak of war there were in Bristol two bodies of men ready for service, the Royal Naval Auxiliary Sick Berth Reserve and the "F" Bearer Company. The members of the former reserve were called up on August 2nd, 1914, and they served continuously from that date. The "F" Bearer Company were in camp when war was declared, but they were immediately sent home to await instructions. As the men were not posted to a Military Hospital, as originally intended, they were offered and accepted as the personnel of the Duchess of Westminster's War Hospital at Le Touquet. Outside the mobilisations made at the outbreak of the war these were the first men to proceed overseas. The men were entrained for Southampton, and on September 26th 1914, were taken across in Sir Thomas Lipton's yacht.

Over 850 men of the City of Bristol Corps have served in the various hospitals in England, or on active service on the continent of Europe, in the Near East and Far East and other parts of the world.

Because of the valuable training the brigade men received prior to the war, the Embarkation Officer at Southampton requested the assistance of the members of the brigade in time of great pressure. Over fifty members of the Bristol Corps were sent to him for service on the ambulance trains leaving Southampton for all parts of the United Kingdom.

In addition eighty-five members of the Bristol Corps were despatched to Eastleigh Clearing Hospital to assist the Officer Commanding in his heavy work of clearing casualties which arrived from overseas. Sixty-one members were enlisted in the R.A.M.C. for duty at the Beaufort War Hospital, Fishponds, Bristol, seventy-four members joined the Naval Medical Services and were posted for duty at Chatham, Devonport, and Haslar. Thirteen men from Bristol helped to man the Lady Hardinge Hospital for Indians in the New Forest. In fact, men were posted for duty in the R.A.M.C. all over the United Kingdom, and from all sources reports have been received which testify to the excellent work these Bristol men have done.

The Corps rendered assistance to the Bristol Branch of the British Red Cross Society in the work of transporting sick and wounded soldiers from the railway station to the military



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hospitals and from the base to the various depots, and the valuable help given in this direction has been publicly acknowledged by the Red Cross Society on more than one occasion. The Corps conveyed 2,960 wounded men from the trains to the hospitals.

In addition to the assistance given in detraining at Temple Meads the St. John men were in charge of the unloading of hospital ships at Avonmouth Docks, under Commandant A. Cotton, M.B.E., and Quartermaster Trott. This work did not commence until early in 1917, but they embarked and disembarked 77 hospital ships, unloaded and loaded 230 ambulance trains, and dealt with 36,341 sick and wounded soldiers.

### THE VOLUNTARY AID DETACHMENTS.

These detachments, some of which had been formed in November, 1909, were trained and annually inspected for efficiency in transport and hospital work until the outbreak of the war, when they were mobilised in accordance with the War Office scheme. The first hospital train arrived in Bristol on September 2nd, 1914, when 120 men came from Mons. From that date 417 trains were dealt with, bringing 37,771 sitting cases and 31,640 stretcher cases, making a total of 69,411. The detachments also undertook the subsequent removals from the base hospitals to the various auxiliary hospitals in the surrounding neighbourhood. Altogether 102,933 patients were dealt with in this way. Ambulances were given or lent to the Bristol Branch of the British Red Cross Society for this purpose, and were supplemented by the civil ambulances of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and cars owned by various ladies and gentlemen, many of whom gave their personal assistance as drivers. There were nine detachments in Bristol, three men's and six women's.

The War Office numbers and names of Commandants were as follow: Bristol/1, Mr. T. Crawford; Bristol/3, Mr. Charles Challenger; Bristol/5, Mr. A. Cotton, M.B.E.; Bristol/2, Mrs. S. G. Griffiths, O.B.E.; Bristol/4, Mrs. E. M. Jolly; Bristol/6, Mrs. M. V. Harvey; Bristol/8, Mrs. M. G. Ormerod; Bristol/10, Mrs. S. M. Napier Miles; Bristol/12, Mrs. M. E. Herapath. These detachments were raised by the British Red



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Cross Society except Bristol/5, which was raised by the local corps of the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

The three men's detachments and the first four women's detachments assisted at the Bristol station, carrying out all the work in detraining and in feeding men on arrival during all hours of the day and night. The Bristol/10 detachment reserved its services for the Kingsweston auxiliary hospital, which was organised and controlled by Mr. and Mrs. Napier Miles; and Bristol/12 detachment assisted at the Bishop's Knoll hospital, a branch of the 2nd Southern General Hospital, which was organised and controlled by Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Bush.

There were 432 men in the Bristol detachments, of whom 242 served in His Majesty's Forces. The women numbered 464, serving in the various military and auxiliary hospitals and assisting in the detraining of sick and wounded at the Bristol stations. A large proportion of the ambulance trains arrived in the early hours of the morning, and much credit is due to all those helpers who attended regularly, as it often meant that they had to go to their day's work after the unloading of the train. It was a frequent occurrence for the ambulance drivers to work for forty-eight hours at a stretch, yet in spite of all, the workers were most willing, and their cheery manner and the gentleness they showed when dealing with the stretcher cases were greatly appreciated by the wounded men, so much so that Bristol won fame at the fronts for the treatment of the sick and wounded soldiers who returned. On many occasions the detachments have been complimented by the military authorities on the carefulness and celerity with which the sick and wounded soldiers were treated.

At the outbreak of the war the Military Authorities placed the detachment in the hands of the County Director, Dr. J. S. Griffiths, to take charge of whilst they were mobilised. As an honorary military official and representative of the Joint War Committee he was also responsible for the internal economy and administration of all auxiliary hospitals in his area in receipt of a capitation grant from the War Office. The certification of all motor spirit licences for Red Cross work, the purchase of all kinds of foodstuffs, issue of priority certificates for hospital repairs, and countless other details were comprised in the work of his office, in which he was assisted by his Secretary,



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Mr. W. B. Williams, A.C.I.S. The Selection Board for interviewing all candidates for nursing and general service work in hospitals for the sick and wounded was comprised as follows : Mrs. S. G. Griffiths, O.B.E., Chairman, Mrs. M. G. Ormerod, Mrs. E. M. Jolly, with Mrs. L. Smith as Honorary Secretary. The number of candidates interviewed was 376, most of whom received appointments.

### 2ND SOUTHERN GENERAL HOSPITAL.

The history of the 2nd Southern General Hospital, R.A.M.C. (T.F.), dates back to the Territorial Force Act of 1908, when it was first formed. On formation it was placed under the command of Lieut.-Colonel J. Paul Bush, C.M.G., who continued in his post down to April, 1917, when the War Office requested him to organise a Southern General Hospital for France.

From 1908 to August, 1914, the hospital existed only "on paper"; but the staff were all appointed, and once a year the Officers (with the exception of the *à la suite* officers), N.C.O.'s and men were mobilised for a month's training in camp. The original scheme provided only for a hospital of 520 beds, and the Bristol Royal Infirmary Committee, on the completion of their King Edward VII. Memorial building, undertook to supply this accommodation on the outbreak of a war. The Matron of the Royal Infirmary, Miss A. B. Baillie, was also appointed as Principal Matron on the Territorial Force Nursing Staff, with control of all the nursing personnel.

On August 4th, 1914, mobilisation took place and Lieut.-Colonel Bush assumed command. The Royal Infirmary Committee found the claims of the civil population were so heavy that it was impossible for them to supply, as had been arranged, the full unit of 520 beds. They, however, placed at the disposal of the authorities the magnificent new wing of the Infirmary, with 260 beds (which in 1912 was opened by His Majesty the King), splendidly equipped and in full working order. In order to furnish the full unit the Bristol Board of Guardians who had just erected an Infirmary of 260 beds at Southmead, came forward in the most patriotic manner and offered to place this new building free of rent at the disposal



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of the War Office. Both these offers were gladly accepted, and the city of Bristol was fortunate indeed in having public institutions of such a character devoted to the welfare of the wounded, fully equipped and actually ready for use. At the end of August the first convoy of wounded men was received.

The war had not been in progress many weeks before it was realised that the 520 beds originally contemplated would be quite inadequate, and extensions would have to be made. The Southmead section was enlarged at once, and Mr. R. E. Bush, brother to Lieut.-Colonel Paul Bush, placed his beautiful house, Bishop's Knoll, Stoke Bishop, in the hands of the authorities, and in the most patriotic way converted it at his own expense into a hospital for 100 beds, and maintained it (specially for Australian soldiers) without cost to the country throughout the war. Mr. Bush was not content to equip and maintain the hospital, but he acted as Commandant, assisted by Mrs. Bush as Quartermaster. The hospital very quickly earned a reputation for comfort and efficiency that were probably unsurpassed anywhere, while the gratitude of the patients and the continuous requests from the wounded to be sent to this hospital showed that its reputation was fully deserved.

In fact, it may be said at once that a striking feature of all the hospitals in Bristol and its neighbourhood was the efficiency of the organisation and the excellent arrangements made for the comfort and welfare of the patients.

Early in the war a very successful innovation was made in the 2nd Southern General. One of the most important sections of the clerical work was that connected with finance. The Officer Commanding, seeing the importance and vastness of this work, obtained the services of Mr. J. Arnold Lambert as Financial Secretary. The scheme under his management proved so successful that it was subsequently adopted in other centres.

So much for the beginning of the Base Hospital itself, but additional beds were simultaneously being provided in numerous hospitals staffed and equipped by the detachments of the British Red Cross Society. These hospitals were not confined to Bristol, but were scattered over the counties of Gloucester, Somerset and Wilts, and were all under the control





BISHOP'S KNOLL HOSPITAL. GROUP OF PATIENTS AND NURSES.







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of the Commanding Officer at the 2nd Southern. These hospitals did not receive patients direct from the Front, except at a later date in the important centre at Cheltenham, but acted as reliefs to the Central Hospital, which passed on its patients to the Red Cross Hospitals as soon as they were fit for the journey and were no longer in need of any special treatment which could only be provided in the Base Hospital.

The first Red Cross Hospitals were opened in October, 1914, Sir Charles Cave's fine house at Cleve Hill being the earliest opened in the Bristol district, closely followed by Handel Cossham Hospital at Kingswood. In the same month the first two hospitals were opened at Cheltenham, which was afterwards to become the most important centre, outside Bristol, in the area of the 2nd Southern. Farther afield in Gloucestershire Charlton Park, Lydney, Gloucester, Stroud, Tewkesbury, Horton, and Badminton were all opened in 1914; in Wiltshire Corsham, and in Somerset Newton St. Loe, Clevedon, Gourney Court at West Harptree, Shepton Mallet, the Sanatorium at Weston-super-Mare, two hospitals at Bath, viz. the Royal Mineral Water and the Royal United hospitals, were receiving patients before the end of the year.

To return to the Base Hospital. Before Christmas, 1914, it was realised that a further extension was necessary, and arrangements were at once put in hand to again extend the number of beds at Southmead. Five temporary wards were erected, airy and spacious, and shortly after, to supply a great want, a recreation room for the use of patients was added through the instrumentality of the Inquiry Bureau, who subsequently enlarged and considerably improved it. Better accommodation for the R.A.M.C. staff was also provided. Two years later, in 1917, a further 300 beds were added in temporary wards, making the total accommodation at Southmead for the last two years 1,040 beds, while accommodation for yet another 300 was provided by tents.

Throughout the years 1915 and 1916 the authorities in London were ever crying for more beds, and in response to this demand, together with the large increase at the Central Hospital, more and more auxiliary Red Cross Hospitals were being opened. In Bristol altogether there were eleven hospitals, viz. Cleve Hill, Handel Cossham and Almondsbury,



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opened in 1914 ; Foye House, Kingsweston, the Homœopathic Hospital, opened in 1915 ; the Bruce Cole Hospital, the Eye Hospital, the General Hospital and the Queen Victoria Hospital in 1916 ; and in 1917 the Ashton Court Hospital for officers.

Captain Sir Frank Colchester-Wemyss, as County Director of the Gloucestershire Red Cross Society, organised and arranged for the equipment by the Gloucestershire Red Cross Society of numerous auxiliary hospitals in the County of Gloucester. He quickly brought into play his great powers of organisation, and instituted a scheme for supplies of food for auxiliary hospitals, which proved so successful that it was recommended for adoption throughout the country.

The two hospitals at Cheltenham were soon increased to sixteen, with some 1,400 beds, in the Cheltenham area, and from May, 1915, onwards ambulance trains were received there direct from the ports. Altogether from first to last there were seventy-four auxiliary hospitals administered from Bristol, though not quite all of these were ever open at the same time, and those in the Cheltenham area were for purposes of administration treated as one large hospital of 1,400 beds.

As the war proceeded a fresh enlargement was made at the Central Hospital. In 1916 the Red Maids' School at Westbury-on-Trym was converted into a hospital of 200 beds. It was admirably equipped by the British Red Cross Society, who also obtained and furnished a large house for the nursing staff of this new section of the 2nd Southern.

The work of administering this very large area, with its numerous scattered hospitals, was very arduous, and at times, such as during the great battle on the Somme in 1916 and the attacks in Flanders in 1917, the pressure was for weeks at a time almost more than the staff could withstand, and enormous as the increase of beds had been, there were many days when the supply fell short of the demand, and it was seen that the provision made, which had at one time seemed almost extravagant, was barely sufficient for the needs of the time.

In 1917 Lieut.-Colonel Bush accepted the post of Officer Commanding the 56th Southern General Hospital, B.E.F., and at very short notice left for France, taking with him a large number of medical officers, nurses and R.A.M.C. staff.



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He was succeeded by Lieut.-Colonel Arthur B. Prowse, who remained in command until the hospital was closed in the spring of 1919.

By the autumn of 1917 the hospital reached its fullest development. No further hospitals were added after November, 1917, though extra accommodation was found in existing hospitals, notably the Bristol General Hospital, which gave extra wards for the use of the soldiers.

At the beginning of the war, apart of course from the members of the T.F.N.S., the staff consisted exclusively of officers, N.C.O.'s and men of the R.A.M.C. As time went on the need for men grew more pressing. One of the difficulties which the administration had to face was the constant withdrawal of all men fit for active service, and their replacement, first by men of a lower physical standard, and later by women. At the time of the Armistice practically the whole clerical staff and the telephone operators consisted of women, who worked most steadily and enthusiastically.

The last change in the general character of the 2nd Southern General Hospital came in the spring of 1918, when the large Southmead section was converted into a special centre for orthopaedic treatment. A majority of the beds were reserved for these special surgical cases, and by the end of the year the Military Authorities decided to make the hospital a separate establishment, and detach it from the 2nd Southern. On January 1st, 1919, it ceased to be the Southmead section and became the Special Military Surgical Hospital, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel A. Milne Thomson, C.M.G., until the autumn of 1919, when the hospital was closed and the patients transferred to the hospital under the control of the Ministry of Pensions at Bath.

At the end the 2nd Southern was closed down with a speed which was almost startling at the time. Between January 1st, 1919, and the end of April of the same year all the patients were cleared, or handed over to other hospitals. By the end of March the splendid work of the Cheltenham Area was finished and the hospitals emptied. About one half of the remaining auxiliaries were closed, and the remainder, which still contained many patients, were placed under the control of other hospitals. In the middle of April the Royal Infirmary



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despatched its remaining cases either to Bath or to the Red Maids' Section, which was handed over to the Southmead Surgical Hospital, and remained open till the autumn.

By the beginning of May, 1919, there was but a skeleton staff, consisting of the Commanding Officer, the Registrar and the Quartermaster, who in temporary offices at Clifton finished the long and difficult process of winding-up a great hospital after almost five years of existence.

Some mention must be made of the special work done at the hospital. The main portion of beds were always available for ordinary sick and wounded, but in addition to the special surgical work at Southmead many other specialist centres were maintained. Among these may be mentioned typhoid and dysentery cases, for which the hospital was a centre, a large number of beds reserved for penetrating wounds of the chest, and an ophthalmic centre which was created at the headquarters at the Royal Infirmary for dealing with all men whose sight was destroyed or seriously injured. Very large numbers of men who had lost one eye (men totally blind all went to St. Dunstan's) passed through this section, and when their wound was healed were fitted with artificial eyes.

Throughout the war there was at headquarters a Standing Medical Board, and many thousands of officers and men appeared before them.

### SOUTHMEAD.

As already shown, the largest section of the 2nd Southern General Hospital was at Southmead, and this section had some important features peculiar to itself. It opened with only 260 beds, but during the war it was constantly enlarged by the erection of the new wards, built either of brick or timber, or by tents, until it contained over 1,300 beds. This gave the authorities opportunities for adopting improvements discovered during the war, and the hospital certainly became one of the most interesting and in the opinion of the War Office one of the best organised and managed in this country. When it was transferred from the 2nd Southern General and formed into a separate unit it had a full complement of 1,040 permanent beds, and up till that date had received 37,397 patients, including 2,315 officers. Two great losses suffered



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by this section were the deaths during the war of Lieut.-Colonel Michell Clarke, who was head of the medical side, and Lieut.-Colonel Munro Smith, who was head of the surgical side.

When transferred on the 1st January, 1919, Southmead became a large centre for orthopædic work, and one of the great features was the admirably arranged workshops, in which the patients underwent curative treatment and also training for their future livelihood. This branch of work was little known in Bristol, so quietly was it carried on, but when it is stated that the workshops were acknowledged by the War Office, with the solitary exception of those at Shepherd's Bush, the headquarters of the orthopædic work, to be the finest in any hospital centre in Great Britain, it will be understood that in this as in so many other forms of war work Bristol led the way. It was a great loss to the city when it became necessary to transfer the work to Bath in the autumn of 1919. During the nine months in which the hospital was treated as a separate section over 3,000 men were admitted for the purpose of obtaining this special cure. The extent of the work may be realised in a small measure when it is stated that from the 1st January, 1919, to 31st July, 1919, there were 50,797 attendances for massage, 12,009 for electricity in the Physiotherapy Department, which was such a feature of the hospital. Another branch in which great work has been done is in that of Psychotherapy, where the most striking success has been attained.

Many rapid cures were obtained in a marvellous way in cases of functional disorder and paralysis, and the whole results testify to the great skill shown by the surgical, medical and nursing staffs.

### THE BEAUFORT WAR HOSPITAL.

On February 4th, 1915, when the casualties were steadily increasing, an intimation was received by the Committee of Visitors to Bristol Asylum that the War Office had urgent need for many more beds for sick and wounded soldiers. It was then suggested that the patients at the Bristol Asylum, Fishponds, should be sent to other asylums in the West,



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thus freeing the building for use as a military hospital. The request was immediately acted upon, and the conversion of the building to its new purpose was begun. The asylum is a large two-storied stone building to accommodate 1,045 patients, and it contains twenty-four wards, large and small. Beds were placed in the ward corridors and day rooms and two operating theatres were constructed of corrugated iron lined with patent plaster. The Duke of Beaufort was approached with the request that his name might be given to the hospital, and he kindly consented. Dr. J. V. Blachford, Medical Superintendent of the asylum, was appointed Officer Commanding the Beaufort War Hospital, with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel. To his excellent work and administrative powers the success of this hospital was largely due, and Major J. R. P. Phillips, took up the duties of Registrar. The War Office appointed Miss A. C. Gibson as Matron and supplied sisters and nurses from Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Staff Reserve as they were required. The first convoy of wounded was received on May 24th, 1915. Toward the autumn of that year there was a great demand for beds, and consequently the Visiting Committee approached the Board of Guardians, who kindly responded by clearing out their Female Infirmary block at the workhouse, lending it as a home for the sisters and nurses. By this transfer 200 more beds became available at the hospital for the sick and wounded soldiers. In addition 180 emergency beds, to be placed upon the floor if required, were provided, and this brought the number of beds available to: Regular, 1,460; emergency, 180; total, 1,640.

In the summer of 1916, at the suggestion of Colonel Sir Robert Jones, an Orthopædic Centre for the district was established at the Beaufort War Hospital. Five hundred beds, including twenty for officers, were allotted for the orthopædic cases. Under the control of Major E. W. Hey Groves, this Orthopædic Centre did exceedingly valuable work. The existence of workshops and other buildings which could easily be adapted was a governing factor in the selection of the institution as the first Orthopædic Hospital in Bristol.

The scheme was experimental, and though it was evident that such centres were absolutely essential, the Army authorities were reluctant to spend money on the necessary



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expansion, wishing that the needful "sinews of war" should be provided by the Red Cross Societies or by private enterprise. A public meeting was held in the Beaufort War Hospital at which King Manoel, Sir Robert Jones and others spoke; but it appeared that some of the leading citizens of Bristol took the view that the Army authorities ought to be responsible in the matter of finance, and money was not forthcoming.

In the meantime centres gradually increased to twenty-two scattered over the country, and the work went on with unabated vigour at the Bristol centre. Men from distant parts of the world came to study the methods. Captain Eisdell Moore from New Zealand and Captain Wace from British Columbia joined the staff, and soon a constant stream of American surgeons passed through the centre at Bristol to learn the work before joining up for service overseas or being put in charge of similar hospitals in America. Sometimes as many as six were working here at once, and there were always two.

As the number of soldiers needing treatment grew with great rapidity, and as the authorities tried to send men needing such treatment as near their own homes as possible, it soon became still more imperative to have a larger number of beds, and Southmead Hospital was taken over as a Special Military Surgical Hospital.

At the Beaufort War Hospital thirty beds were reserved for mental cases among local troops; and in 1917 a ward of ten beds was established for cases of sickness among the German prisoners of war in the labour camps near Bristol. The greatest number of patients sleeping under the roof of the Beaufort War Hospital on one night was 1,487; the greatest number provided for by the hospital at one time, including patients billeted in the neighbourhood was 1,535.

The work of the hospital ceased on February 28th, 1919, by which date the total number of patients received reached 29,434. The deaths at the hospital numbered 164, and of these thirty were cases locally admitted suffering from influenza and pneumonia during the epidemic of the autumn and winter of 1918-19.

Miss Underwood, R.R.C., became Matron of the hospital about a year after it was opened. At that time the supply of nurses in this country had become so depleted by drafts sent



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overseas that the hospital authorities were instructed to employ V.A.D. nurses, who were appointed by the Women's Joint V.A.D. Committee, Devonshire House.

"The boys" who were accommodated at the Beaufort War Hospital were given an exceedingly happy time, and the splendid grounds of the hospital facilitated out-door games.

The final list of the auxiliary hospitals attached to the Beaufort War Hospital was : Bruce Cole, 120 beds, which had formerly been attached to the 2nd Southern ; The Pavilion, Calne, 45 ; Red Cross Hospital, Chippenham, 100 ; Oaklands, Clevedon, 120 ; Relief Hospital, Longleat, Wilts, 100 ; Standish Hospital, Stonehouse, 120 ; The Manor, Tockington, 20 ; Gourney Court, West Harptree, 45 ; Ashcombe House, Weston-super-Mare, 166. Total number of beds, 837.

For the first years of the war all the hospitals in Bristol, with the exception of Horfield, were in direct communication with the Deputy-Director of Medical Services, Southern Command ; in April, 1916, Beaufort War Hospital was placed in the Devonport area for administrative purposes ; in August, 1918, all hospitals, convalescent homes, the medical arrangement for troops and prisoner of war camps, etc., in the counties of Gloucester, Somerset, and Wilts (part of) were placed in a new area, No. 2 Area, Southern Command, with headquarters at Bristol ; Lieut.-Colonel Paul Bush, C.M.G., was brought back from France to administrate this area as Assistant Director of Medical Services.

In September, 1915, their Majesties the King and Queen visited the larger hospitals in the Bristol area, spending the whole day in talking to the sick and wounded, and in making minute enquiries into the working of the various departments, and at the end of a long day expressed their entire approval of the immense work that was being done in Bristol.

Of the work of the Bristol hospitals during the five years of war it is impossible to give more than this outline. When it is remembered that before war broke out all that was contemplated was a comparatively small hospital of 520 beds, it is obvious that very hard work and very fine organisation were needed to improvise during the progress of hostilities (which brought with every month that passed increasing difficulties) a great network of hospitals,



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which in June, 1917, contained in the 2nd Southern General 5,789 beds and in the Beaufort War Hospital 2,477. From first to last 88,966 patients were admitted to the 2nd Southern General Hospital, and 42,380 out-patients were attended to, and, as has already been mentioned, 29,434 in-patients were admitted to the Beaufort War Hospital.

No article on the hospitals should be published without allusion to the remarkable skill and devotion shown by the surgical, medical, and nursing staffs, and the N.C.O.'s and men. In no other centre were better results obtained, and the unremitting care and attention shown throughout are worthy of the highest praise. Unfortunately space will not allow reference to be made to the wonderful cures effected. Very many could be cited, and they alone are proof of the great ability displayed.

The clerical side also reached a very high standard of efficiency, and the enormously heavy work entailed by shortage of staff was only carried out owing to the enthusiasm and *esprit de corps* shown by all concerned. Throughout the strain was great, and at times the calls made upon the staffs seemed more than could be met; but no matter how severe they were or how quickly they came, they were always overcome with a readiness and cheerfulness which arose from the desire of all to afford relief to those who were suffering. Only those who have been closely in touch with the inner working of great hospitals can realise what this means, both for the smooth working of the organisation and the assistance and comfort given to the patients.

The finest tribute to all that was accomplished came from the patients, who spoke often with genuine feeling of the kindness and the skilful treatment they had received in the many Bristol hospitals. Bristol may indeed look back with pride upon the work done in caring for our sick and wounded sailors and soldiers.

### A HOSPITAL TRAVELLING FUND.

A Hospital Travelling Fund was established in March, 1915, by Mr. W. H. Williams, Hon. Secretary of the Soldiers and Sailors' Families' Association, for the purpose of enabling



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wives and mothers to visit their wounded relatives in hospital in various parts of the country. From that date upwards of 3,500 wives, mothers and relatives were sent to hospitals, free of cost, in every part of the United Kingdom from Perth to Penzance and from Dublin to Dover, and all intervening places. The work in connection with this Fund was entirely voluntary, not one penny being charged for administrative expenses.

### SOLDIERS AND SAILORS' HELP SOCIETY.

The Soldiers and Sailors' Help Society had been in existence since the Boer War, and in August, 1914, it was, in consequence, the only Society able to help the discharged and disabled men. Financed by the Prince of Wales' Fund, it did everything possible for the men in the way of giving them allowances to supplement their pensions, sending them to convalescent homes, arranging for their artificial limbs, appealing for increases of pensions and finding them employment.

In July, 1916, when the Naval and Military War Pensions Act came into force, and in consequence a War Pensions Committee was established in Bristol, the Hon. Secretary of this Society and her helpers were asked by the Committee to carry on the work as before. The money was no longer provided by the Prince of Wales' Fund, but by the Treasury. The Society was able to help the majority of the men as hitherto, for there were numerous cases that did not come in any way under the new War Pensions Regulations, and the Committee, when possible, assisted from the Soldiers and Sailors' Help Society Funds, which now consisted solely of local subscriptions and donations, as the head office does not undertake to assist the branches financially.

Many of the branches worked quite independently of the War Pensions Committees, but in Bristol the two worked together, as by so doing overlapping was prevented, and also as the Society did not consider that a War Pension granted was sufficient, money was voted to supplement it. The Society was much hampered by lack of funds, and in 1918 an appeal was made, with the result that about £80 was collected.

Ever since the beginning of the war friends of the Society



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have been very kind in sending down garments of every description, which have been much appreciated by the men. Unlike other war work, that of the Soldiers and Sailors' Help Society has not ceased with peace. It will continue as long as there are any disabled men in need of assistance.

### NAVAL PRISONERS OF WAR FUND.

The Bristol Naval Prisoners of War Fund was inaugurated in 1915 by Mrs. Nan Mardon, whose husband was Honorary Commander of the Bristol Division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. The fund was created for the benefit of members of the Bristol Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, of whom about a hundred were taken prisoners at Antwerp in October, 1914. They were among the earliest prisoners of war, and were the victims of the first bitterness of German hate. Little was known of the fate of these men for many months, but reports which filtered through the stringent censorship told of many deaths from exposure and privation. Some time elapsed before the efforts made succeeded in getting food to these men, who devised every kind of artifice to make known their need to those at home. The Germans allowed nothing derogatory to their system of treatment to pass their censors. At the outset parcels were either lost in transit or stolen. These thefts were frequent, and were committed even by the very men who acted as guards, and who flaunted the stolen goods before the famished faces of the rightful owners. Clothing and boots had also to be supplied with the aid of this Fund, and cigarettes and tobacco were sent in every parcel, alas! only too often to be pilfered before delivery. However, by the end of 1915, parcels were arriving with a fair amount of regularity, but owing to the many changes of addresses, and the various camps through which packages had to pass, it happened sometimes that the contents arrived unfit for consumption. By this time sufficient funds had been obtained to send each man two parcels per month; later they were increased to six per month. Thus an endeavour was made to ensure every man having a parcel at least once a week. It is an acknowledged fact that but for the food sent out by this organisation, and by the men's families, in the earlier days of the war, many more men would have



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perished from starvation, and the tales of the economy exercised by the captives to make their parcels eke out were pitiful in the extreme. Another direction in which the activities of this organisation found scope was in the pressure brought to bear upon the authorities in regard to the scandalous restrictions in letter writing imposed upon the men. The success of these efforts was seen in the greater regularity and frequency of letters from Germany towards the close of the war. Personal letters were written to every man each month by Mrs. Mardon, who was constantly in touch with their families. She was often able to cheer them by comparison of letters received, and this was greatly appreciated in the days of limited correspondence by wives, mothers, and children. From time to time the families of the prisoners were brought together and entertained. Books were collected and sent to the men, as well as medicines, games, etc.

By the close of hostilities the total amount raised for this Fund exceeded £5,200, the whole of which, without deductions for management, was dispersed for the benefit of these Bristol men. Some thousands of letters were written by Mrs. Mardon. Of the original number of men captured at Antwerp only ninety returned; some died in the last days of their captivity, others on their way home, and one the day after reaching home. These deaths were due to the terrible hardships imposed upon the Bristol prisoners by their captors. When demobilised, the ex-prisoners were entertained by Mrs. Mardon, and were personally visited in their homes, and there exists a very real affection for the one who sacrificed herself for their sakes during the dark days of the war. After the declaration of peace these men met together, and formed a committee, the result of whose work was shown in the handsome silver rose bowl which they presented to Mrs. Mardon as a mark of their esteem and affection for her.

### HOSPITAL SUPPLIES AND COMFORTS FOR TROOPS.

A movement which afforded a very large number of Bristol women of all classes and ages, rich and poor, and those who had neither poverty nor riches, an opportunity to do valuable war work, was that for the systematic supply of bandages, dressings,





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ENTERTAINMENT OF RETURNED PRISONERS OF WAR BY THE BRISTOL RED CROSS SOCIETY,  
JANUARY 8TH, 1919.







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etc., and extra garments to the military hospitals, and clothing comforts to the troops in the field. Local bodies of needle-workers were formed as soon as the needs of the men were realised, and when in January, 1918, the Bristol Association of Voluntary Organisations was formed and registered under the War Charities Act, 1916, the Bristol and Clifton War Hospital Supply Depot, for example, had already despatched nearly 475,000 articles. The Association was inaugurated at a meeting convened by the Lord Mayor of Bristol (Alderman Frank Sheppard, O.B.E.) on January 3rd, 1918. The aim was to make a concentrated effort in Bristol for the sending of hospital supplies and comforts to the troops. On and after that date working parties co-operated and fresh depots were opened. The Association was affiliated to the Army Council Scheme for the co-ordination of voluntary effort on behalf of the troops, which was administered through the department of the Director-General of Voluntary Organisations. Miss M. R. Wethered, Hon. Organising Secretary for the Gloucestershire Association, consented to serve in the same capacity for Bristol; thus the two Associations were run from the one central office, and economy was effected in administrative expenses.

The Association was divided into four branches, viz. :  
(1) The Lady Mayoress (Mrs. Frank Sheppard) opened a Receiving Depot at the Grand Hotel, Bristol. Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Harford and later Mrs. Turner.  
(2) The Bristol and Clifton War Hospital Supply Depot. Hon. Secretary, Miss Olive.  
(3) The Redland War Hospital Supply Depot, which was organised and opened. Hon. Secretary, Miss Bethell.  
(4) The Bristol Evening Workers, who started their campaign under the guidance of their Hon. Secretary, Miss Inskip, their headquarters being at the Bristol and Clifton War Hospital Supply Depot. As official requisitions were received they were sent to the branch which could meet the demand. In addition to this emergency requisitions were dealt with, the depots often putting in extra hours of work in order to meet the urgency. Monthly requisitions were also dealt with, and each month supplies were sent to many destinations, amongst which were the following hospitals: Beaufort War Hospital, 2nd Southern General Hospital (Southmead Section), Lysaght Auxiliary Hospital, 1st Canadian General, B.E.F., 56th General



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Hospital, B.E.F., 53rd General Hospital, B.E.F., 41st Stationary Hospital, B.E.F., 74th Stationary Hospital, B.E.F., 3rd Stationary Hospital, B.E.F., 57th Casualty Clearing Station, B.E.F., 2nd Casualty Clearing Station, B.E.F., 3rd Casualty Clearing Station, B.E.F., 21st General Hospital, B.E.F., the French Red Cross Hospital, Goudrecourt, France, and also the Italian Red Cross. The greater part of the monthly requisitions were supplied by the Bristol and Clifton War Hospital Supply Depot, which consistently maintained a wonderful output. The Lady Mayoress's Receiving Depot was highly successful. It provided materials and attracted many helpers who could not join the parties of workers at other centres.

This Association worked for fourteen months, to February, 1919, and during that period 568,810 articles were despatched, the goods going to practically every theatre of war. A sum of £3,951 4s. 8d. was raised for the work, of which amount £2,021 3s. 10d. was obtained from a Flag Day and Fête organised by the Bristol Branch of the United Kingdom Commercial Travellers' Association. Her Grace the Duchess of Beaufort acted as President of the Association, and the Lady Mayoress of Bristol as Chairman.

In addition to this organised effort there were many private funds for providing comforts for individual units of men on active service, whether abroad or at home. In a number of cases officers' wives made themselves responsible for these movements.



## Chapter IV

### The Inquiry Bureau







## CHAPTER IV

### THE INQUIRY BUREAU

THE SCOPE FOR WORK—VISITS TO PATIENTS—RECREATION—THE SOLDIER'S ROOM—A GREAT TRANSPORT TASK—SYSTEM OF SEARCH FOR MEN—ORTHOPÆDIC TREATMENT AT SOUTHMEAD—CHRISTMAS CHEER—WELFARE OF AMERICANS—GREAT ANNIVERSARIES—FINANCE—PATHOS AND HUMOUR—WELL DONE.

VERY soon after the 2nd Southern General Hospital was mobilised, with its Headquarters at the Bristol Royal Infirmary, the Officer Commanding was inundated with inquiries regarding the patients, and found great difficulty in coping with the correspondence thus entailed. An appeal for voluntary help was made, and a little band of workers offered him their services, which he gladly accepted, and all inquiries relating to patients were handed to them to deal with. This was the foundation upon which the work of a purely voluntary organisation known as "The Inquiry Bureau" was built.

At the time it was mobilised the 2nd Southern General Hospital comprised 260 beds, but so rapidly did the need for increased accommodation arise, that it was constantly necessary to open fresh sections and subsidiaries, and by June, 1917, it had 5,789 equipped beds in some sixty hospitals coming under its administration. In the beginning of 1915 the Beaufort War Hospital was opened at the Asylum, Fishponds, and a similar history attaches to it until its fullest equipment comprised nearly 2,500 beds at the base and its subsidiaries. The actual number of beds in Bristol was about 4,000. As the various hospitals were opened the Inquiry Bureau were requested to increase their area and carry on their work in the new establishments, until they were connected in one way or another with over 130 hospitals containing 18,000 beds, and extending over an area comprising South Wales, the counties of Monmouth,



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Gloucester, Somerset, and a great part of Wiltshire. Thanks to the courtesy of the Officers Commanding, the Inquiry Bureau were allowed to have offices in the hospitals at the Bristol Royal Infirmary, the Southmead, the Red Maids' and the Ashton Court sections of the 2nd Southern General, and accommodation was also provided at the Beaufort War Hospital. This proved a very great help, as the offices were open from the early morn till late at night, in fact often till the early hours of next morning, and the members were able to work in the wards at any time. The patients quickly found they had someone to whom they could always turn for advice or assistance, and the offices became not only Inquiry Bureaux but Information Bureaux, Post Offices, Banks, Telephone Exchanges, and general stores of both knowledge and goods.

The great aim and object of the organisation were to prove of assistance and benefit to the men who were, or had been, patients in the military hospitals. The little band who initiated the work quickly discovered scope for all their energies and found it imperative to increase their numbers. Additional members were introduced, amongst whom were several ladies, while from time to time as the work became heavier it was found necessary still further to add to those engaged in the work, until they numbered some hundreds. Largely composed of men with business training, they soon realised the necessity of placing the work upon a properly organised basis, which was divided into sections under the control of a management committee.

The inquiries which were really the origin of the work, became so heavy that it was decided to introduce the card-index system. This system then formed the groundwork of the organisation. An index was instituted at the 2nd Southern General Hospital beginning with the first admissions, and so quickly did it prove its worth that it was maintained with scrupulous care, and comprised every admission, whether to the base or any subsidiary hospital, no matter whether in Bristol or in the large area coming under the administration of the 2nd Southern General. The actual number of cards in this index totals 88,966. On each card was entered all the necessary information about each patient, containing particulars of the front he came from, his unit, admission, transfer, discharge,



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besides general details of his case. So important did this particular card index become that every assistance was given by the authorities to make it quite accurate and up to date, and, in order to ensure those ends, the index was checked with the returns from all the base and subsidiary hospitals, and every subsequent movement of the men noted every day. This enabled any inquiry to be answered at any moment of the night or day and proved of incalculable value, as the inquiries received during the twenty-four hours often numbered several hundreds. In addition, so useful did the index become that it was placed at the service of the authorities, who found it indispensable to them in their work. It was soon discovered that though the cards for each man were of great service, yet often inquiries were received for men of a particular battalion, and unless the individual cards were checked it was impossible to tell if men of a certain regiment were in hospital. A Regimental Index was therefore started, and each name was registered under his particular battalion. This ran concurrently with the card index and every admission was entered on it. This Regimental Index is also complete, and comprises every admission since the hospitals were open, therefore containing 88,966 names. It also formed an admirable cross-index or check to the individual cards and amply repaid the extra labour incurred. At the head office at 39 Broad Street, which was kindly lent to the Inquiry Bureau, indices on the same principle were used, and some idea of the clerical labour will be gathered when it is stated that the total number of names on the card indices used by the Inquiry Bureau amounted to nearly half a million.

On their admission into hospital the men's greatest desire was for a sight of the home faces, but at first, owing to the distance and expense, it was a craving which could not be gratified. The Inquiry Bureau at once took the matter in hand. Organised lodgings close to the different hospitals, clean and respectable, where reasonable charges were made, were selected, to which relatives and friends were sent. The most careful inquiries were always made in every case, and if found deserving, arrangements were made for the relatives to visit the men. Many hundreds of these visits were arranged, and if necessary the railway fares and board and lodgings



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were paid. By means of these meetings the recoveries were aided, pain and sorrow lightened, many a weary hour brightened, and in some cases lives even saved. One example, which well illustrates the help given, occurred at a local hospital. A lad of nineteen was so ill on admission that his parents were sent for. They came on a Saturday, and the Medical Officer informed them that he did not think the lad could last the week-end. On the Monday the boy was still alive, but the father stated he must return to his home or he would lose his employment, and he was bound to think of the other children. The mother, overcome with grief, said she must also return, as she had no money to pay for any lodgings. The case was reported to the Inquiry Bureau, and they kept the mother for nine weeks with her son and assisted the father to come down also during this time until the lad had so far recovered that they were able safely to leave him. The Medical Officer and Sister of the ward were confident that it was solely the presence of the parents that saved the lad's life and enabled him to make a successful recovery. Many cases of this kind could be quoted.

From the first inception it was realised by the Medical Officers that it was absolutely essential that some form of amusement should be supplied for the men. Entertainments were at once organised by the Inquiry Bureau both in and out of hospital. Every assistance was given both by local artists and by those visiting the city to provide amusement in the hospitals. Magnificently did they answer to the call. All the finest performers, both amateur and professional, gave their services, and in no instance were they other than honorary. Over 400 local artists have assisted to brighten the weary hours of the sufferers and have provided over 4,500 entertainments. Equally generous and equally appreciated by the patients were the wonderful efforts of the theatrical and music hall artists who have visited the city. From the highest to the lowest in the profession all have shown their readiness to alleviate the pain by providing a laugh or a merry jest, and successful indeed have they been. During the war over 500 entertainments were given and over 5,000 of these artists took part in them.

Not only was it thought necessary to provide entertainment



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for those in hospital, but it was realised that change of scene would be a great help to the convalescence of the men, especially when coupled with healthy amusement. Organised outings to the country in motor-cars were arranged, a voluntary motor service was instituted, and splendidly the owners of motor-cars came to the assistance of the Inquiry Bureau. Day after day outings were arranged to places of interest in the neighbourhood. Tea was provided by friends who were always ready and anxious to entertain the men, while if it could not be so arranged the Inquiry Bureau became caterers and hosts for the afternoon. Owing to the petrol shortage these outings became a great difficulty, and the Inquiry Bureau had to look out for hosts closer at hand. It was not long before the difficulty was overcome. The Committee of the Clifton Zoological Gardens placed their beautiful grounds at the disposal of the Inquiry Bureau during the summer months of each year. Much as the loss of the delightful motor runs into the country was felt, the kindness of the Committee of the Zoological Gardens did a great deal to replace it. Three times a week the men were entertained at the Gardens, tea being supplied and sports and games arranged by the Inquiry Bureau for the various hosts of the afternoon. Many friendships were formed, in fact friendships which in some instances were only the prelude to something stronger and abiding, and causing the Bureau to have serious thoughts of altering their name to "The Matrimonial and Inquiry Bureau." During the summers in which the Zoological Gardens were thus utilised 32,540 men were entertained there, and the Committee of the Gardens may fairly take credit for the patriotic service rendered to the wounded.

When the summer was over the problem of winter entertainments had to be solved, but this was also quickly overcome owing to the offer received from the Committee of the Museum and Art Gallery, who not only placed a large room capable of holding over 400 men at the disposal of the Inquiry Bureau, but undertook to fit it up so that it could be used as a tea and concert room, while the whole of the galleries of the Museum and Art Gallery were thrown open to the men. In addition to this the lecture theatre was opened, and the Director and his colleagues gave their services in providing lectures. It



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need hardly be said that such an excellent offer was gladly accepted. As in the case of the Zoological Gardens, applications to entertain the men were received in large numbers. In every instance, as at the Zoological Gardens so at the Museum and Art Gallery, the proceedings were organised and arranged by the Inquiry Bureau. Tea was always provided, and the generous band of artists were always ready and willing to furnish an entertainment either musical, theatrical or otherwise, while the many lectures given in the Lecture Theatre at the Museum on a large variety of subjects proved of great interest. Over 50,000 patients were entertained during the war at the Museum and Art Gallery at these entertainments, and nothing but intense appreciation was expressed at both these summer and winter outings. Quite one of the features at the entertainments was the splendid work done by the band of ladies, who prepared the teas and waited on the men. Only those behind the scenes could have any conception of the task involved, and the smoothness and ease with which it was carried out spoke volumes for the spirit of the helpers.

In addition to these particular entertainments, all through the period the hospitals were open, there was a continuous stream of outings arranged through the Inquiry Bureau for the amusement of the men and provided by private individuals, firms, societies and institutions. Many tens of thousands of the patients enjoyed the hospitality so kindly given, and the great pleasure given to the men and the gratitude shown by them were ever very striking. The Inquiry Bureau always arranged the transport of the men for all outings, and as the number for which transport had to be provided averaged about 1,200 each week, it will be understood that this in itself was no light task. During the whole period the Inquiry Bureau conveyed over a quarter of a million passengers, entirely composed of the patients, to and from the various outings and entertainments without a single mishap to anyone.

Reference must also be made to the assistance given the Inquiry Bureau by the theatrical, music hall, and picture house managers. At the Prince's Theatre alone over 20,000 men were guests during the war, 50 to 100 seats being allotted to the wounded every week at the matinee. Special matinees were arranged at the Prince's Theatre, the Theatre Royal, and the



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Hippodrome and Empire music halls, and thousands enjoyed the hospitality of the managements. The picture houses were thrown open to the man in hospital blue, and the appreciation felt was best shown by the fact that many thousands took advantage of it. The British Tommy is always a sportsman, and those present at a couple of matinees at the Hippodrome were keenly interested in the efforts of the Inquiry Bureau to break records. London claimed the record of clearing a hall holding 2,000 wounded. The time taken was one hour. The Inquiry Bureau heard this and at once entered into competition, and 2,270 men, of whom 400 were crutch cases, were entertained at the Hippodrome by the management, and every man was out of the hall and sent off to his proper destination in fifty-two minutes. At a subsequent entertainment at the same house, when 2,200 men, including 350 crutch cases, were present, this record was beaten, the hall being cleared in thirty-seven minutes.

A very important branch of the Inquiry Bureau's work was concerned with the men discharged from hospital as medically unfit for further military service. From the very first it was found that these men had great difficulty in ascertaining what was due to them in the shape of gratuities and pensions, and how to obtain help from the recognised associations. So acute did this trouble become that a plan was urgently required to meet it. The hospital authorities handed to the Inquiry Bureau the names of the men about to be discharged. These men were at once seen and full details of their families and also their needs, whether for financial assistance or work, were obtained from them and entered on a card index and filed for reference. The fullest information was given to the men of what they might claim and how to obtain it, and communication was established with the representatives of the Incorporated Sailors and Soldiers' Help Society in each man's home district, in conjunction with which Society the Inquiry Bureau worked in this branch of their duties, informing them of his requirements and needs and asking them to assist him on his return to civil life. Many thousands of cases were thus dealt with, and many were the letters of gratitude received from the men who by these means had been enabled to obtain work and assistance for themselves and their families. One case among



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the many in which help was given is especially worth noting. A patient was discharged, and through the recommendation of the Inquiry Bureau obtained work at his home in the North of England. A few months later a plaintive letter was received from him asking if work could be found for him in the neighbourhood of Bristol, as while a patient there he had become engaged to a girl who lived in the district, but did not wish to go so far from home as the North of England, and as she would not come to him the obvious thing was for him to go to her. Needless to say, in such a crisis the Inquiry Bureau did not fail.

At the end of 1916 the British Red Cross instituted a scheme for assisting the discharged men in this country, but finding the Inquiry Bureau were dealing with the work in the West of England, they left the matter so far as the districts coming under their administration were affected entirely in their hands.

In 1917 the War Pensions authorities instituted their scheme in connection with the discharged men. This was partly upon the lines of the plan which the Inquiry Bureau had so successfully initiated and carried out, and the Inquiry Bureau were immediately appointed the special visitors under this scheme for all the hospitals in this area. The Pensions Committee in the home district of the men had then to be communicated with, and the men referred to such Committee for assistance when they reached their homes. It is impossible, however, to overlook the difference in the system. Before, there was much of the personal element, and the Incorporated Sailors and Soldiers' Help Society, through their members, proved wonderfully helpful to the Inquiry Bureau in this work. Never was a complaint from the men received, but after the work was undertaken by the Government, and made strictly official, red tape appeared and much of the personal interest in the home districts of the men was eliminated, and many cases came before the Inquiry Bureau which they had to take up with the authorities. It is thought this position was largely due to the fact that officials had not sufficient time to explain fully to the men how they could satisfy their needs, and had to be content with handing them some pamphlet which was often involved in its wording and required a legal training to understand.

Another branch of the work of the Inquiry Bureau which involved much labour and care was that known as the Searching





ENTERTAINMENT OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS AT ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS  
BY THE INQUIRY BUREAU.



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PARTY OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS SETTING OUT ON RIVER TRIP  
ORGANISED BY THE INQUIRY BUREAU.







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Work. As may be gathered from the name of the organisation, the work was not confined to the inquiries with regard to patients in the military hospitals, but also included the collection of information about men who were actually missing on the various fronts. This work was one of the initial branches of the Inquiry Bureau's organisation, and when in January, 1916, the Inquiry Department of the British Red Cross and Order of St. John on behalf of the War Office organised the work at the various fronts and throughout Great Britain and Ireland, they immediately approached the Inquiry Bureau with an application to them to undertake the responsibility. This application was at once granted.

The system adopted was as follows. Immediately notification was received at the hospital that a convoy was expected the searchers appointed for the purpose were advised, and attended next day for the purpose of interviewing the men. A copy of the nominal roll, or list of the patients in the convoy, was supplied by the hospital authorities, and each man on the nominal roll bore a registration number for the Bureau Index. On the searchers obtaining a report from one of the convoy the number which the informant bore on the nominal roll was inserted on the report. Each report when obtained was copied and despatched to the authorities, the original being kept and filed under the informant's regiment in strict numerical order. A card index was also compiled containing all the names of those who were missing with regard to whom information was obtained, and on each card the Bureau's number of the informant was inserted. The result of this system was that any report with regard to any missing man could be referred to at a moment's notice.

A big Regimental Index was kept at the head office, upon which were entered the date of the men's arrival in hospital, the front they came from, their regiment, number, unit, and company, the hospital and ward in which they were patients, and the dates they went to and left the Front, and the number of reports of the missing they were able to give. The reason for obtaining the particulars of their stay at the Front was in order to see, as each subsequent list of missing was published, whether any men were in hospital who might possibly give information with regard to any freshly-inserted names.



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Soon after the Inquiry Bureau had commenced the work in the Bristol district they were requested to enlarge their borders, and to undertake the work in the whole of the area covered by the 2nd Southern General and the Beaufort War hospitals. As direct admissions were taken in the Cheltenham area, and at that time there was a big convalescent hospital camp for the Canadian troops at Bath, the work at these centres had to be organised. Shortly after this the Bath War Hospital was opened with 520 beds, subsequently increased to 1,350, and searchers were appointed to take charge of the work at that hospital. Again the Inquiry Bureau were requested to enlarge their area, and to extend operations to South Wales, which included the hospitals of the 3rd Western General and the Welsh Metropolitan and their subsidiaries. The Officers Commanding at both these hospitals granted every facility and searchers were appointed and the work taken in hand.

A few months afterwards the work in the Newport area was added. These increases to the original area resulted in the Inquiry Bureau having charge of a district ranging from Aberystwyth to Hereford, thence nearly to Birmingham, across Salisbury Plain to the borders of Dorset, from which the boundary-line ran along the county of Devon up to the Bristol Channel, the total number of hospital beds, as has already been stated, numbering nearly 18,000. The whole of this work was centred at the head office of the Bureau, and all the reports obtained in the various districts were forwarded there for the purpose of being copied, recorded, and subsequently despatched to the authorities in London. Great care was exercised in appointing searchers, and when possible barristers or solicitors were selected to undertake this work, as it was felt that it was such as required skill in taking evidence, so that accuracy and dependable information could be obtained. In choosing searchers preference was given to those who could, if necessary, give the whole of their time, the result being that in one particular hospital of 1,040 beds, where only whole-time workers had charge, it was the invariable rule for all the admissions to be seen within twenty-four hours of their arrival in hospital, and the reports were usually in the hands of the authorities in London within forty-eight hours of the arrival of the convoy,



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a unique record in the history of the work. In all, over 100,000 members of the Expeditionary Forces were seen, and nearly 9,000 positive reports obtained. It is understood that these results are the best from any hospital centre in Great Britain, both from the point of view of numbers, style of the reports obtained, and the percentage.

On the repatriation of the prisoners of war the authorities at once realised that the men returning would most likely be able to give a good deal of information about the missing. On their arrival in England, those not requiring hospital treatment were sent to camps which were formed at various centres for the purpose of refitting and registering the men before sending them to their homes on leave. This was an opportunity not to be missed. The Inquiry Bureau were approached with a request to assist in organising and taking charge of this work, and searchers were at once despatched to the camps at Canterbury, Dover, and Ripon. It was, however, found impossible either to interview all the men at these camps or to place before them a complete list of the missing, partly on account of their short stay, only 36 to 48 hours, at these camps, and partly on account of the difficulty of the authorities in preparing a complete list of those missing about whom they desired to question the returned prisoners, a difficulty caused by the short notice received of the arrival of these men. It was therefore arranged that they should be seen on arrival at their depots on their return from the two months' leave which was granted them, and the Inquiry Bureau were asked to organise and take charge of the work at the depots within their area. This was done with very successful results. It was, however, found that many of the men had at once been demobilised. Wherever possible the names of these men were obtained, and they were communicated with and asked to call and inspect the list and give any information in their power. Many reports were thus obtained. In several cases the men whose names actually appeared in the official lists have been found in hospital, while in others the sole survivor of a party has been discovered and been able to supply information of the rest, the only one living who could do so. The reports obtained have been gladly welcomed by the friends of the missing. The vast majority of friends preferred the dreaded certainty to the wearing



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suspense, and many are the expressions of gratitude which have been received from all over the world.

One other of the duties undertaken was the Postal Department at the headquarters of the 2nd Southern General Hospital. This was no light task, as the letters often numbered thousands a day and the parcels hundreds, and the mere delivery and collection involved a very considerable amount of labour, quite apart from the books which had to be kept, while the responsibility attaching to the work was heavy, as a large number of registered letters and parcels were received daily.

At the Southmead section of the 2nd Southern General Hospital all telegrams for the patients were received and dealt with by the Inquiry Bureau, and as they were all transmitted through the telephone and the numbers were very considerable, the work both physical and mental in so large a hospital was very severe. As it was found the men often had great difficulty in cashing or changing the foreign notes or money which they had in their possession on returning from abroad, the Inquiry Bureau made arrangements to overcome this and acted as bankers for the men. Thousands of pounds passed through their hands in this way.

A highly important effort was connected not only with the wounded as soldiers but also as civilians. The opportunity only arose towards the close of the war. For some time orthopædic treatment had been given in the hospitals, first at the Beaufort War Hospital and then at the special Military Surgical Hospital at Southmead. This treatment was largely carried out in specially erected workshops, and consisted of exercising (by means of manufacturing articles) the nerves, muscles or sinews which had been damaged. It was found that the interest created amongst the men in producing the finished article by their own efforts was a great help in the cures. Many of the men, however, were so badly injured that it was impossible for them to resume the trade or profession at which they had earned their livelihood prior to the war. A scheme was evolved by the War Office for enabling the men to be trained in the orthopædic workshops, while still in hospital, for work in after-life. In other words, the treatment in the workshops was made not only curative but vocational. For this purpose the shops were enlarged, fresh machinery and appliances purchased,



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instructors appointed, and the men advised as to the best trade or profession they should take up. Special education officers were appointed by Southern Command, and a Committee were formed of representatives of employers and trade unions and voluntary organisations. The representative of the Inquiry Bureau was appointed Chairman. It was at once realised that if the vocational training of the men was to be successful the period spent in the workshops must be recognised as part of the technical training or apprenticeship which they would in the ordinary way have to serve with a firm. The Ministry of Labour took up the scheme, and the local Committee at once approached the Technical Advisory Committee of the Ministry for the district with a view of obtaining their support. A Sub-Committee to inspect the workshops were appointed. These were approved, and it was arranged with the Technical Advisory Committee that the vocational training should be carried out in close conjunction with them. If any patient desired to take up a certain trade it was first of all ascertained if there would be a vacancy for him at the end of his training. If there were every prospect of there being one he was examined by representatives of the employers and the trade unions to see if the trade would be suitable for him, and if so he commenced his training. The benefit of this system is obvious. It meant that the men were advised and assisted in selecting the best trade or profession for them, and were sure of a post at the end of their training. The results have been admirable. The men, realising that something tangible for their future was being done, and that they were not being penalised by being kept in hospital, and so losing their chance in civil life, became very anxious to take advantage of the opportunity given them. The workshops were regular beehives of industry, and so excellent were the machinery, appliances, tuition, and results, that the authorities recognised the workshops, with the one exception of those at the headquarters of the orthopædic section of the British Red Cross at Shepherd's Bush, London, where many thousands of pounds had been spent, as being the finest in any training centre in Great Britain. Special instructors had charge, and when the scheme was recognised by the Ministry of Labour only trade unionists were appointed. The range of subjects in which tuition was given was very wide. Poultry



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farming, pig breeding, languages, book-keeping and accountancy, hygiene, and practically every trade. In fact, there was hardly a selected subject in which instruction both theoretical and practical could not be given. This work, which has proved, and it is hoped will prove, of great service to the men was carried on until the hospital at Southmead was closed. The patients were then transferred to the Pensions Hospital at Bath, where the training was continued.

The account of the work of the Inquiry Bureau in the hospitals should not close without special reference to the Christmas festivities. These were always on a generous scale. The Beaufort War Hospital was handed over to the Inquiry Bureau for Christmas Day. It was no light task to have to provide fare for nearly 2,000 men, most of whom had appetites which would turn any dyspeptic green with envy. Turkeys, sausages, hams, plum puddings, fruit, cake, etc., were supplied by the ton, while each patient received a personal gift. The other hospitals were not forgotten. Good things supplied by the ladies' committees of the Red Cross and other friends to the Bristol Royal Infirmary, Southmead, and Red Maids' sections were substantially supplemented by the Inquiry Bureau. Fare of another kind, but equally good, was supplied by the artists who provided entertainments, while games, dancing, and competitions for bed patients helped to make the hospital a home of mirth and enabled the patients to forget, at all events for the time, the existence of the war and to recall the atmosphere of peace and goodwill toward men. Each year at Christmas a further notable feature in the hospitals was the civic entertainments which the Inquiry Bureau arranged for the Lord Mayor. Originally these were held in the Drill Hall of the 4th Gloucesters, where in 1915 over 1,700 men were the guests of the citizens at an entertainment and tea. Subsequently the Soldiers' Room at the Museum and Art Gallery was used, the men being entertained in parties of 400. Any patient who was unable to be present at the civic entertainments was presented with a gift from the Lord Mayor, Sheriff and Citizens, and thus many a bed-ridden lad had a disappointed face changed to one with a smile. As for the gifts that were collected for the hospitals, their name truly is legion. Everything, from a book to a recreation room,



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chairs of every description, including out-of-door wheel chairs with donkeys to draw them, billiard and bagatelle tables, and games of every kind both indoor and outdoor, gramophones, pianos, surgical and medical appliances, meat-cutters, bed elevators and transporters, enabling the bedsteads to be moved with the patients in them. Any want that was brought to the notice of the Inquiry Bureau was supplied if funds in hand or an appeal to the public could obtain it. The hearts of those appealed to went out to the sufferers, and it was rare indeed that any request was made in vain. Early in the war the necessity for a large recreation room at Southmead was greatly felt, and as the War Office were not prepared to give one, the Inquiry Bureau stepped in and erected a fine room with stage, scenery, green room and seating accommodation for 400, and later, when this was found too small, they enlarged it so that it would hold about 500.

When the American forces came to this country they were made to feel that they were among brothers. The Inquiry Bureau were asked by the County Secretary of the Voluntary Organisations, working for the War Office, to look after the American troops in the southern end of Gloucestershire and in Bristol. This was done gladly, entertainments both at the camp at Yate and in Bristol being arranged, and many homes thrown open to the men. Upon the admission to hospital of American wounded the American Red Cross approached the Inquiry Bureau for assistance, and as soon as any fresh patients arrived, whether in Bristol, Bath, Cheltenham, Newport or Cardiff, headquarters in London and the local branch were notified. The official lists of missing Americans were supplied to the Inquiry Bureau, who undertook all the searching work with regard to the Americans in the same way as for the Imperial Troops. A touch of pathos with reference to one party will illustrate the feelings of all who were patients in the hospitals in the neighbourhood of Bristol. A few days before Christmas an order was received that all Americans who could be moved were to be sent to the American Convalescent Camp, so that they could spend Christmas among their own countrymen. So upset were the patients who had to go that they appealed to the Officer Commanding and pulled every possible wire to be allowed to remain in hospital for Christmas, as they



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knew they were among real friends who had made them feel, though in hospital, as if they were in their own country at home, and when the Officer Commanding regretfully explained that he was under orders and had to obey, the disappointment was so great that in some cases tears were seen stealing down the men's cheeks.

In addition to the work connected with the hospitals the organisation of the Inquiry Bureau was utilised for other purposes. "Days" were arranged to celebrate the anniversaries of events which will always be memorable. A great Mons "Day" anniversary was held on the 26th January, 1917, when 900 of those who formed the celebrated "Contemptibles" were present, headed by Field-Marshal Lord French. These numbers were very striking, as they were limited to men of the original force who were Bristolians or in Bristol on the day. Each year the anniversary of the landing in Gallipoli was commemorated, and each time Sir Ian Hamilton, the General Officer Commanding in Chief of the Force, came gladly to meet his old comrades, and on each occasion about 400 members who took part in that enterprise answered the roll-call. Nor have the discharged men as a whole been forgotten. A great matinee was held at the Empire Music Hall, followed by tea at the Drill Hall of the 4th Gloucesters, when each building was filled with "Silver Badge" men. In addition the children of those who fought have also been entertained, and none of those who were present at the Drill Hall will forget the scene when nearly 2,500 merry children filled the hall with their laughter and cheers.

The financial side of the work has been important, for much of it could not have been carried on without money. Thanks to the generosity of the citizens, there has been no failure of the work for this reason. Many have been the subscribers of all classes, and many a half-crown for "the boys" has been given by poor souls who could ill afford it. Many public entertainments have been given, among which may be mentioned the magnificent concerts given by Madame Clara Butt and the Royal Orpheus Society, the numerous efforts of the local artists, who in addition to assisting the Inquiry Bureau by taking part in the entertainments to the wounded have so generously given their services at concerts in support of the funds and numerous



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collections taken at the picture houses and other places of public entertainment. Two special appeals were made by the Lord Mayor, which were instrumental in obtaining about £6,000. The organisation was of course registered under the War Charities Act, and accounts were audited and published yearly. Many touching gifts have been received, but there is only space to refer to one. A poor lad who was a patient was being discharged, and came to the Head Office to express his thanks for all that had been done for him. He said he was simply a working man and had little to give, but he had some half dozen coins of different nationalities, which he asked the Inquiry Bureau to accept and sell for what they would bring and to place them to their funds. Such gifts are worth much.

The Bureau, starting like the sowing of a single mustard seed grew into a big tree which needed some hundreds of workers to administer. It has been work of intense pathos, yet often tinged with considerable humour. If it were asked what has been the most striking thing observed during the five years of service among the wounded, probably the unanimous answer would be the courage and unfailing good spirits of the men. A wonderful example was a patient who was the life and soul of one of the largest hospitals, always merry, always bright, willing and patient, and yet he had lost both arms and both eyes. The keenness of the men on their own particular hospital was delightful, and an amusing episode occurred once when two Australians, strangers to each other, happened to meet. They found both had been in hospital and commenced comparing notes, each claiming his hospital to be the finest in the world. So keen did the discussion grow that words came to blows, until the better boxer gave his opponent one straight from the shoulder, saying, "Now will you own Bishop's Knoll is the finest hospital in the world?" The other exclaimed, "You silly fool! why didn't you say what the name of your hospital was? Why, that's where I was!" The result was a hearty laugh, and the two became the best of friends.

Whatever the work may have been, and though a very great deal of it has been done quietly behind the scenes, those who have taken part in it may feel that sympathy given and received, trouble taken and appreciated, suspense



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and anxiety ended, and all the kinship of a common sorrow had their healing effects and proved of real assistance for those for whom it was done. Thus those who carried out the work, however small the portion they performed, or humble the position they filled, have not missed their reward.



## Chapter V

The Y.M.C.A., C.E.M.S. and other Agencies







## CHAPTER V

### THE Y.M.C.A., C.E.M.S., AND OTHER AGENCIES

BRISTOL Y.M.C.A. RAISES £350,000—WORK AT AVONMOUTH, SHIREHAMPTON, HORFIELD AND ON SALISBURY PLAIN—MANY BRANCHES OPENED—THE DUG-OUT—POPULAR CANTEENS FOR SOLDIERS AND WAR WORKERS—CARE FOR BOYS—C.E.M.S. START AT BISHOPSTON—EXTENSION TO BALDWIN STREET—REST HOUSE IN VICTORIA STREET—ST. ANDREW'S HOME, AVONMOUTH—NEWSPAPER READERS' HELP—BELGIAN REFUGEES WELCOMED—WHAT THE BOY SCOUTS DID.

IMMEDIATELY it became evident that England could not avoid war the various churches of the city began to consider how they could best serve the cause of justice and right. They speedily organised movements for the well-being of the soldiers. Their parish rooms and schoolrooms were opened for the use of the men as places where they could find wholesome recreation and opportunities for social intercourse and letter-writing. The Young Men's Christian Association and the Church of England Men's Society extended their activities in all directions, and continued to serve the fighting men until such service was no longer required. The war story of these two great societies stands out conspicuously in the record of what Bristol did in the memorable five years. This chapter tells of their splendid effort and of other work—notably that of the Roman Catholic Church for the Belgian refugees, in which men and women of all creeds cordially joined.

The development of activities on behalf of the fighting forces and munition workers under the sign of the "Red Triangle" constitutes one of the greatest romances of the war. During those first eventful days of August, 1914, even whilst war still hung in the balance, the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Association in London evolved preliminary plans for the service of the men about to be called to the colours, based on the experience of fifteen years' work in the summer training camps of the Volunteers and later of the Territorials. Practically all the resources of every Young



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Men's Christian Association in the kingdom were mobilised in an incredibly short time. Executive officers and voluntary workers in large numbers eagerly came forward to help in this great social and patriotic effort, both at home and abroad. Hundreds of canvas institutes in the camps and rapidly adapted halls and rooms in billeting areas sprang into existence all over the country at a few days' notice. Everywhere they were crowded with men using the now world-famous "Red Triangle" notepaper to convey to their friends and loved ones a knowledge of their whereabouts and doings. Light refreshments and "smokes" added to their comfort; concerts, entertainments, lectures, books, magazines and games were all speedily brought into use to meet the needs of the men during their short periods of leisure when free from the demands of their intensive training. Then soon came the official sanction to accompany the Expeditionary Forces, and efforts were redoubled to plant the moveable "Red Triangle" hut or tent with its many facilities wherever it could be most usefully employed on behalf of the men in France, India, Gallipoli, Egypt, Mesopotamia, British East Africa and elsewhere. To meet the cost of these extensive enterprises it was necessary to raise large sums of money, and the country nobly responded to the appeals sent out. Bristol contributed most generously to this national fund, and also provided large numbers of the workers who volunteered for personal service.

In the early days of the war centres were organised at the Avonmouth Docks, in Avonmouth itself, and at Shirehampton Remount Depot. The Young Men's Christian Association premises at St. James's Square and branches, with their recreative and other facilities, were thrown open without charge to the men in uniform, and were extensively used. The services of the General Secretary, Mr. F. J. Fedarb, were soon entirely requisitioned by the National Council in order to extend the work he had initiated on Salisbury Plain and in Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire. Mr. S. K. Morley, Assistant National Secretary, who had laid the foundations of the National Council War Emergency Fund, and in a few months raised something like £350,000, followed Mr. Fedarb as General Secretary of the Bristol Young Men's Christian Association. He speedily induced the Directors to embark on a policy whereby Bristol,



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in addition to what she had already accomplished, was led to undertake responsibility for considerable extensions of war work inside the city area.

*Horfield Bungalow.*—In response to a request from the Military Authorities a well-designed hut was erected opposite Horfield Barracks for the use of the Gloucesters and the recruits who were subsequently to follow them. The Bungalow, by which name the hut was known, also served as a popular rendezvous for the wounded soldiers at Southmead Hospital. The establishment of this centre was made possible by the generous support of friends, who subscribed some £1,500 for the purpose, in addition to many gifts of furniture and equipment. Such extensive use was made of this hut, that close on a quarter of a million sheets of "Red Triangle" notepaper were used by the soldiers there. The assistance rendered by a number of lady friends in connection with this work has proved of inestimable value.

*The Dug-Out.*—The Dug-Out has undoubtedly proved the most popular and successful piece of war work undertaken by the Bristol Young Men's Christian Association. It being found impossible during the war to proceed with the erection of the new central building, for which a site had been secured in Colston Street, it was decided towards the close of 1916 to place here a temporary building to serve as a city hut for wounded soldiers, for men of His Majesty's Forces passing through Bristol or on leave, and for the men stationed locally. A well-planned building, with a novel exterior of sandbags and mortar, giving a most realistic effect in full accord with its title, was erected. And here excellent accommodation was provided, comprising a large canteen and recreation room, reading room, dormitory with twenty-six beds, baths, stores, kitchen, caretaker's premises, cloakroom, etc. The opening ceremony was performed on May 17th, 1917, by the Lord Mayor, the late Sir Barclay Baron. Within a few weeks the accommodation was taxed to its utmost limits, and it became necessary to embark on considerable extensions. Old premises at the rear were transformed into additional dormitories, bathrooms and stores, 140 beds being thus provided. The extension was opened in December, 1917, by the Lord Bishop of Bristol. Even this provision at times proved inadequate, as many as



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230 men a night finding sleeping accommodation here from time to time. Over 400 voluntary workers, ladies and gentlemen, have rendered a wonderful measure of personal service, cheerfully undertaking the most varied and arduous duties at all hours of the day and night on behalf of our brave defenders. The Dug-Out has been open day and night from the outset. For each day of the week there were lady leaders, who were most regular in their attendance, and carried on the heavy work with remarkable smoothness and business capacity. No matter how bad the weather, or how distant their homes, these ladies were always at their posts, and, with their devoted helpers, are deserving of the highest praise for their untiring efforts in the interests of the "Boys." On celebrating the completion of two years' work badges were distributed to many of the voluntary workers who had given long periods of service, and on this occasion the President, Mr. H. E. Chattock, J.P., gave the following striking figures :—

Over 700,000 meals had been served in addition to light refreshments.

78,055 men had occupied beds.

The total attendance during the two years of the Dug-Out's existence had amounted to well over one million soldiers and sailors, and latterly discharged men.

961,000 sheets of "Red Triangle" notepaper had been distributed free.

Numerous teas and entertainments had been arranged for the wounded.

Each Christmas, despite the food shortage, between 2,000 and 3,000 meals, consisting of turkey, plum pudding and other Christmas fare were provided free, Christmas trees and concerts were also arranged.

Quite a number of men stranded in the city without money had been provided with meals and sleeping accommodation.

Nearly 4,000 New Testaments had been given away to men on their own application.

Song services, Sunday social teas, frequent concerts, visits to places of interest had been included in the programme of work undertaken here.

Baseball and cricket matches had also been arranged between American, Colonial and local teams.



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Most remarkable and gratifying have been the many letters of appreciation from soldiers in all parts of the world who at some time have enjoyed the home-like atmosphere of the Dug-Out.

*Royal Engineers' Military Camp, Hallen.*—On the invitation of the Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers, who were encamped at Hallen during the autumn and winter of 1917-18, a marquee was opened for the use of this battalion. The conditions here were exceedingly rough, the work being carried on under canvas throughout the winter, and on one occasion the marquee was completely wrecked by a heavy fall of snow, but was quickly repaired and re-erected for the service of the men.

*Portbury National Shipyard Camp.*—The construction of the Admiralty National Shipyard at Portbury brought a large number of men into this place, and a Young Men's Christian Association Institute was erected in the camp. The Institute, an attractively-built hollow brick hut, sixty by thirty feet, with all the usual facilities of a modern Young Men's Christian Association camp, was opened early in May, 1918. At the end of the opening ceremony Major Middleton, Royal Engineers, showed his appreciation by giving a donation of £100 to the work. On the special request of the authorities the directors immediately took steps to double the size of the hut, the need for enlargement being urgent, and soon afterwards this extension was opened by Major-General A. S. Collard. This provision at Portbury proved a veritable godsend to men stationed in such a quiet place. The lectures, concerts, and the meetings proved most popular, and up to the early months of 1919, when the military were withdrawn, the hut represented a most valuable contribution to the welfare of the men stationed here. Warm tributes to the value of this work were paid by officers and men alike. On the removal of the military from Portbury civilian labour was introduced for the completion of the shipbuilding slips, and these men also found the Young Men's Christian Association Institute of real service.

*Bedminster Branch.*—During the occupation of "The White City" by the troops Bedminster Young Men's Christian Association Branch Committee set apart a section of their premises entirely for the use of the soldiers.



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*Kingswood.*—At Kingswood special provision was made for the wounded from Cossham Hospital and for others home on leave by the erection of a hut originally intended for the Roumanian Army. This was opened in the spring of 1918, and proved an immediate success. After the closing of the hospital the hut was increasingly used by ex-service men. The site on which the hut stands is ultimately intended for a new permanent Young Men's Christian Association building for boys and men.

*Medical Board Rooms.*—At the request of the Recruiting Authorities, a comfortable reading room, provided with daily papers and illustrated periodicals was equipped and proved very acceptable to those awaiting medical examination at Park Street and Colston Hall.

*Corn Street Inquiry Office.*—Through the generosity of the directors of the London Joint City and Midland Bank, premises at the corner of Small Street and Broad Street were placed at the disposal of the Young Men's Christian Association, and proved of service as a rest room and enquiry office for soldiers and sailors, serving also as an organising centre of the "Red Triangle" work for boys.

*Munition Workers.*—The needs of munition workers and others engaged in similar work were not overlooked by the Young Men's Christian Association. Eight centres were established, and at each substantial meals and light refreshments were obtainable.

*Avonmouth.*—The Association undertook the running of a spacious canteen and institute at His Majesty's Works, Avonmouth, and for many months the building was crowded to overflowing by the men engaged in the construction of the works.

*Hallen and Henbury.*—Scarcely had the opening ceremony been performed at Avonmouth, when the Government having commenced the construction of the great new munition works planned for the Hallen and Henbury district, the Young Men's Christian Association were invited to accept responsibility for several new canteens. Pending the erection of these permanent buildings, the work was carried on for some months in small huts and caravans both at Hallen and Henbury, valuable services being performed under conditions which were often



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extremely rough and uninviting. Tens of thousands of men were provided with refreshment which otherwise they would have been quite unable to obtain, and the work was continued until the abandonment of the scheme by the Government.

*Filton.*—A further work was initiated at the request of the contractors for the men engaged on the construction of extensions to the Filton Aerodrome, refreshments being served from a small hut placed at the disposal of the Association by the contractors.

*Gloucester Road Instructional Factory Canteen.*—An extremely valuable piece of social work was carried out in connection with the Gloucester Road Munitions Instructional Factory. During the first three months this work was conducted under very difficult circumstances in a large marquee which was later replaced by a permanent canteen erected by the Ministry. The girls in training, who received only a very modest remuneration, found this Association canteen of great value, and special tribute was paid by representatives of the Ministry of Munitions to its high standard of comfort and efficiency. Lectures and concerts arranged by the Young Men's Christian Association and parties given to wounded soldiers by the employees were held in this hut.

*Chittening Constructional Works Canteen.*—A canteen was opened in the early summer of 1918 for the men engaged in the erection of the Shell Filling Factory at Chittening, and was continued until after the signing of the Armistice.

*Albion Shipyard Canteen.*—On the invitation of Messrs. Charles Hill & Sons, a canteen for the workmen and boys engaged at the shipyard was provided, the building which had served as a canteen at Avonmouth being purchased by the firm and transferred to their works. The provision not only of good substantial meals for the ship workers but of popular lectures and concerts was greatly appreciated.

*Chittening Ordnance Canteen.*—The latest development was the acceptance of the responsibility for the canteen at Chittening Ordnance Factory at the request of the military authorities. This enterprise was run by a Joint Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association for several hundred men and girls employed in



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the Ordnance Depot. A large proportion of the men were drawn from the ranks of the partially disabled.

With the exception of the work at Kingswood and Bedminster, all the military and munition enterprises have been under the control of a Committee appointed by the Young Men's Christian Association Board of Management, composed of a small body of well-known and influential citizens, who were not only in full sympathy with the general aims of the Association in times of peace, but had the advantage of personal practical experience in various phases of social and religious effort in this great city. They were thus eminently fitted for the direction of this important new work.

*Boys' Work.*—War conditions created a very urgent demand for an extension of work for boys. The lack of parental control and the unusual conditions created by employment on war work placed a new burden on those responsible for the organisation of boys' clubs. Through the generosity of Mr. Edward Robinson, who accepted responsibility for the rent for a long period, the Association were enabled to take premises in Stokes Croft, and these were devoted entirely to the work of a boys' department with highly successful results. A "Red Triangle" Club was subsequently opened in Jacob's Wells Road. It was opened nightly for the use of boys in the neighbourhood under a capable band of helpers and proved a very great boon. The membership grew rapidly, and the club was often inadequate for those who desired to attend it. At Kingswood fine premises were devoted to boys' work, and rooms were set apart at the Bedminster Branch for a similar purpose. During the winter months fully 1,000 boys a night have been entertained on Saturdays in the large hall at St. James's Square by means of a cinema, which proved a useful piece of social and educational work.

Thus in barest outline is presented the story of Bristol's wonderful contribution to the comfort, well-being and efficiency of well-nigh 3,000,000 sailors, soldiers, war workers and boys through the medium of the Young Men's Christian Association, a record of an achievement of which Bristol may well be proud.



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### THE C.E.M.S.

One day in the fateful month of August, 1914, a member of the Bishopston Branch of the Church of England Men's Society met another and asked, "What is the Society doing for the boys assembling at Horfield?" This inquiry prompted and was indeed the foundation of the work undertaken by the Church of England Men's Society on behalf of the sailors and soldiers during the war. An attempt to provide a building within the camp at Horfield was fortunately abandoned, as it was quickly discovered that the men preferred to find their recreation away from the place of their training. Application, therefore, was made, and quickly granted, for the use of suitable rooms belonging to Bishopston Parish Church. These were promptly equipped and opened in the first week in September, and became veritably the home of some 800 Hussars for a period of about nine months. There and then the Church of England Men's Society learnt how to provide men with food at prices which, writing to-day, seem absurd; how to look after their comfort, and generally to please them. A spirit of brotherhood between members and their guests soon developed, and remains until this day, inasmuch as most of the comparatively few of those good fellows whose lives have been spared are still in touch with some Bristol family or other that was directly associated with this particular effort.

The Church of England Men's Society Council wisely called upon the local Branch to organise the work, and this principle was found very useful later, because when the Scottish brigade was brought into Bristol from Salisbury Plain in the winter of 1914 it was found necessary to have as many as ten similar places open, although for only a brief period.

Then came the development. The Society realised the necessity of a permanent central establishment, and were fortunate in obtaining premises in Baldwin Street. These were officially designated "The Sailors and Soldiers' Recreation Rooms," but became familiarly known as "Baldwin Street." The work here was largely in the hands of St. Nicholas' Branch until it had grown to such an extent that other help was much needed. The rooms remained open until Whitsuntide, 1919, and supplied approaching 2,000,000 meals, not to speak of other



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valuable uses to which the place was put. In the early days of recruiting, when the streets were filled with young men who had joined the local Territorial regiments, many parents were thankful that "Baldwin Street" had been established, and that their sons were finding their recreation therein.

The big and serious responsibility of the Society, however, was to follow. It was realised that numbers of men were arriving in Bristol at all hours, and finding great difficulty in obtaining beds, so the minds of the Committee were turned towards Temple Meads. By December 21st, 1915, premises had not only been discovered at No. 108 Victoria Street, but were equipped and opened, and remained open day and night. This was called "The Sailors and Soldiers' Rest House." Within there were a canteen of fair size, reading-room, billiard room, sleeping accommodation for forty men (soon increased to sixty), kitchen, baths, lavatories, etc., and in the first twelve months 13,813 men slept in beds or on mattresses, and many hundreds more had been accommodated with shelter and blankets. It is calculated that in the same period 200,000 men were served with a meal.

In the course of the Society's work fresh discoveries were always being made, and so again it became evident that a forward movement must be made. No. 108 had become too small to meet the demands, and so another big block of buildings, Nos. 112, 114 and 116 Victoria Street, were acquired and equipped as the central Rest House, and this was officially opened in July, 1917, by General Sir H. C. Sclater, G.C.B., G.B.E.

The newer premises enabled the Society to make provision for the needs of the men on a much more extended scale, with the addition of a chapel for their use. No. 108 became an annexe with seventy-six beds, and later No. 123 Victoria Street was acquired to add fifty more, until there were in all beds for 230 men. There were times when 2,000 men had to be dealt with in the course of three or four hours. Indeed, the pressure on the place on the occasions when extensive leave was granted was alarming, and it is said that no similar place in the country had to face such rushes. Altogether about 200,000 men obtained beds, and well over 2,000,000 meals were supplied in the "Sailors and Soldiers' Rest House," which was not closed down until December 1st, 1919.



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There is still one additional piece of work to mention. For over twelve months the Society were responsible for a Refreshment Buffet on the main approach to Temple Meads Station. This was found useful to meet the cases of those men who had not sufficient time to get to the Rest House, although the latter was only four minutes' walk from the station.

The Society are under a great debt of gratitude to a band of 500 to 600 ladies who assisted them in their work, and who indeed bore the great burden of it. In order to indicate what this burden was like it may be noted that in certain periods, day after day, nearly 700 pounds of sausages were used, and that often a case of thirty dozen eggs was consumed between midnight and 6.0 a.m. Everything was cooked on the premises by voluntary hands, a fact which was much appreciated by the men who were catered for. Generous acknowledgment must also be made of personal help rendered by many gentlemen who were not members of the Society. The members highly appreciate the privilege of having been allowed to undertake this work for the soldiers, and the confidence shown by their fellow-citizens. The effort "to make two ends just meet" in the actual running of the various establishments was quite successful, but considerable capital expenditure was needed. Thanks to the generous reponse of the members and many friends, not only was this money all found, but meanwhile the Society in Bristol were able to send two Church of England Men's Society Huts to France, and to give ten more to the Church Army, the latter being used by the Army of Occupation in Germany.

### ST. ANDREW'S SOLDIERS' HOME.

Almost the first tangible evidence in Bristol of the outbreak of war was the passage through the city of innumerable commercial motors which had been requisitioned by Government for the use of the Expeditionary Force. By Thursday, August 6th, more than a thousand of these lorries had arrived at Avonmouth from all parts of England, and were there awaiting transportation overseas. No adequate arrangements had been made by the army authorities for housing or feeding the civilian drivers, and since the shops in Avonmouth, totally



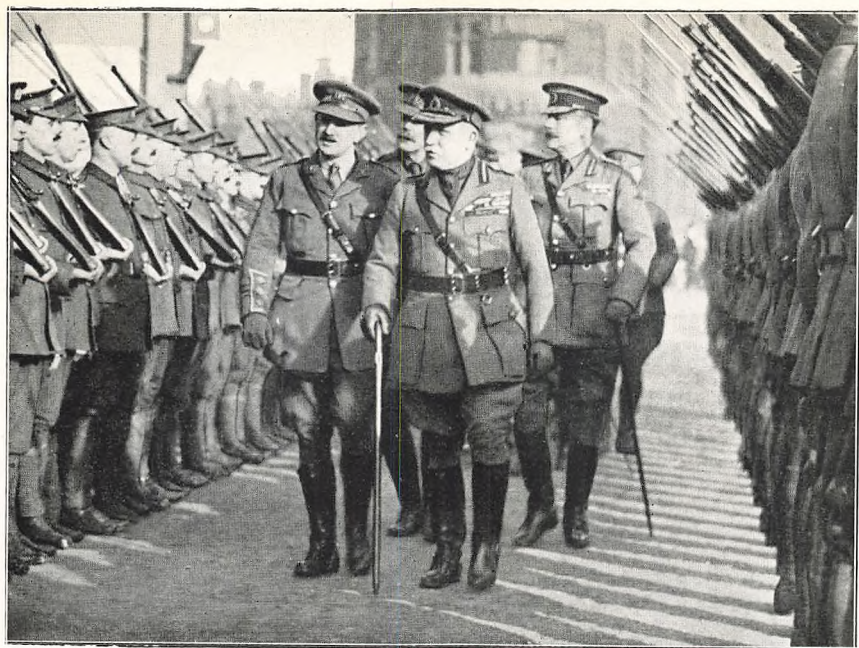
## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

unprepared for such an emergency, were very soon cleared out, the position of the men became really serious. The then Vicar of Avonmouth (the Rev. Harold Gibson) and Mr. Napier Miles quickly realised the state of affairs, and set to work to find a remedy, helped as far as possible by residents in Avonmouth and Shirehampton. However, it soon became necessary to go farther afield, and a number of friends in Clifton who possessed motor-cars were organised for the service, and drove down to Avonmouth with provisions of all kinds which they collected in Bristol. A Committee was formed, and the St. Andrew's Parish Room—afterwards to be known as the St. Andrew's Soldiers' Home—was opened for the accommodation of the lorry drivers. Here the food collected was distributed to them, and numbers of the men were only too glad to sleep in the building, lying on the floor. The capacity of the Home was soon over-taxed, and a relief building in Meadow Street was taken.

The War Office now realised the use which might be made of this voluntary enterprise, and rations were issued to the Committee, which were distributed on the arrival of the convoys at all hours of the day and night. Besides food, shirts, socks, and other garments were collected to supply the urgent needs of the men about to be shipped oversea, and more than a thousand blankets were also given by friends and distributed. At this time also a beginning was made in the work of entertaining the men, and concert parties were frequently motored down to the Soldiers' Home. The Government now made arrangements to house and feed the men in the big sheds and warehouses inside the Avonmouth Docks. Then the building of the Rest Camp to accommodate the transport was set on foot, and things began gradually to get into better shape.

About this time, that is, in the late autumn of 1914, the Remount Camp was established at Shirehampton, upon land extending on both sides of the village. The Committee of the St. Andrew's Home saw that there would be urgent need for a canteen and recreation room for these newcomers, and quickly raised funds for the purpose of erecting such a building. However, before this plan could be carried out the men began to arrive in large numbers. In this emergency the Committee were fortunate in securing the loan from the Bristol Corporation





MONS DAY, 1918.  
VISIT OF FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT FRENCH OF YPRES.



GALLIPOLI DAY, 1918.  
VISIT OF GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.







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of the Public Hall at Shirehampton, which was kept open during the whole of the winter of 1914-15 as a recreation room for the men. These winter months were exceptionally wet and cold, and the conditions in the camp, where the huts were only partially constructed, very far from comfortable. In consequence, the Institute proved a boon to the men in charge of the horses and mules, who at that time had not been enlisted, but were civilians. In the Shirehampton Hall again entertainments were made a special feature, and concerts were given twice a week, many of the best local performers most kindly giving their services. Often some of the party went on during the same evening to repeat the entertainment at St. Andrew's Home, which was being run simultaneously. Several pianos were given or lent to outlying huts in the extremely scattered Remount Camp, as well as to different depots at the Avonmouth Docks. On Christmas Day dinners to about 700 men were given, in their squadron huts, through the instrumentality of the Committee. In the spring of 1915 the Corporation wished to resume use of Shirehampton Public Hall, and the Committee were about to take immediate steps to build a canteen and recreation room, when it became known that the War Office intended to undertake this necessary work. This they accordingly did, and a building was erected in the village of Shirehampton. The Committee co-operated in the furnishing and equipment, but gradually the control of the place was entirely taken over by the military authorities, and the Committee ceased to work in Shirehampton.

Meanwhile, because of the increase of transport through Avonmouth, the need for further developments there was recognised, and a new hut was built adjoining the St. Andrew's Home, thus converting the whole building into a first-class canteen and recreation room, where the men could read, write, play billiards and otherwise amuse themselves.

Weekly concerts were given by a party from Clifton and were much appreciated by the soldiers. At the end of May, 1919, the St. Andrew's Soldiers' Home was handed over by the Committee to the Rev. E. Cousens, Vicar of Avonmouth, as a social centre for the use of the parish. Here the soldiers and sailors are still welcomed, together with demobilised men and other residents in the neighbourhood.



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### NEWSPAPER READERS' HELP.

Previous to the war the *Bristol Times and Mirror* Children's Corner, edited by "Uncle Jack" (Mrs. Frank C. Hawkins, M.B.E.), was known throughout Bristol and the West of England for the good work it did among the poorest children and old folks of this city. Over 50,000 dolls and toys had been distributed, three cots endowed at the Children's Hospital, thousands of new and old garments had been given to the needy, and much money had been contributed to worthy causes. On the outbreak of war "Uncle Jack's" nieces and nephews rallied around her most loyally. The record of work done by her splendid helpers is one of which they may be proud. The following large sums were handed to the various Red Cross Societies and other war charities: Bristol, £2,500; Bristol Belgian Refugees' Fund, £1,352; Serbia and Montenegro, £1,400; Bristol Children's Hospital, £1,200; Russian Red Cross, £1,012; Lord Mayor's Hospital Fund, £500; French Wounded Fund, £150; St. Dunstan's, £100; District Trained Nurses, £100.

Many other charitable and war organisations were assisted, including the Scouts and Guides £200, Kingswood Trained Nurses £65, Orthopædic Home, Guild of the Handicapped, the Navy League Naval Entertainments Fund, Women's War Club, the N.S.P.C.C., etc. One of the most appreciated branches of the Children's Corner work was the Cigarette Fund. Over one million cigarettes were sent to the various fighting fronts. A Woollies Fund was opened, and 30,000 pairs of socks, mufflers, etc., were distributed to the value of over £4,500, these articles being made and paid for by "Uncle Jack's" friends. Gramophones in large numbers, games by the hundred, footballs, cricket outfits and sports kits generally were purchased from the funds. The work of the Children's Corner represented an expenditure exceeding £10,000, and the extent to which the self-denying efforts of the helpers were appreciated may be gathered from the nature of the letters written to "Uncle Jack" by the great Generals. Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig (now Earl Haig) wrote from the British General Headquarters in France, on 14th December, 1918, to thank "Uncle Jack" and the *Bristol Times and Mirror*



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Children's Corner, both in his own name and in that of all ranks of the Armies under his command, adding, "Your efforts on behalf of our men in France have been much appreciated by us all, and we are sincerely grateful to you and the Bristol public for their generosity." General Edmund H. H. Allenby, General Sir William Birdwood, General H. G. Horne, and Marshal Foch wrote in similar terms.

A means of raising money for war charities which proved very popular for a year or two was initiated by the Editor of the *Bristol Evening Times and Echo*, and ultimately named "The Inky Imp Fund." By the expenditure of a good deal of humour and energy a total of £3,000 was obtained from readers of the paper between the date of a first appeal for money for wheel-chairs for the hospitals and the closing of the Fund in February, 1917. The scope of the Fund was quickly extended to a variety of purposes, a substantial amount being devoted to the Hospital Travelling Fund for enabling poor relations to visit soldiers in distant hospitals.

"Half-Back" (Mr. H. Slater Stone), of the *Bristol Evening Times and Echo*, opened a fund for the supply of footballs and sporting kit, musical instruments, etc., to men on active service. Over £4,000 was subscribed, and more than 5,000 gifts were distributed among men at the various fronts. These were articles which the soldiers could not have bought where they were serving. Special local Committees were formed in Redcliff, Horfield, Eastville and Kingswood to support the fund, and a Sixpenny Promenade Concert at Colston Hall produced the record sum of £596. Bristol County Sports Club raised £1,000 to endow a "Half-Back" bed at Bristol General Hospital in recognition of Mr. Stone's war work.

Mention may also be made of the frequent demand from Bristol units on active service for cricket materials and musical instruments. Numerous applications of this kind were dealt with through the *Western Daily Press* by Mr. A. G. Powell; cricketers readily responded to the appeals to provide bats, wickets, leg-guards, etc., for this peculiarly English game; and the generosity of Mrs. Elizabeth Pearce was never found to fail when a gramophone, a banjo, or other musical instrument had to be purchased for some would-be performer in the ranks.



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### THE BELGIAN REFUGEES.

In 1792 Edmund Burke appealed to the British people to help the French clergy who sought refuge in this country from the revolutionary tyranny. The British people, as they are wont, responded nobly, and the kindly Bristol folk were among the most generous. When in 1914 Belgium, over-run by the German Army, became the scene of every atrocity, and the people in thousands fled for refuge to the British Isles, again did Bristol rise to the height of its noble tradition. It gave a home and maintenance to about 2,000 Belgians, and the amount expended on them was about £50,000. The work was inaugurated on Thursday, September 17th, 1914, when at the invitation of the Belgian Consul a Committee was formed with Colonel Mark Whitwill as President, Mr. S. C. Rashley, Mr. L. Goodenough Taylor, and the late Mr. Nicol Reid as Honorary Secretaries. The General Committee appointed an Executive Committee with the Very Reverend Canon Lee in the chair, and Mrs. Cyril Norwood and Miss Lena Smith as Honorary Secretaries.

The first fifty Belgians arrived on September 22nd. They were motored to their various homes. One Saturday afternoon eighty refugees arrived. The following Monday a tramp steamer came in at Avonmouth with seventy-six more. On Tuesday afternoon another seventy arrived, and were similarly cared for.

It will easily be seen what a vast undertaking it was. Yet the growing need of accommodation was generously met, houses in Victoria Square, Clifton, and elsewhere being lent by owners. In all about 2,000 persons were housed, and 60,000 garments supplied. There was hardly a church or chapel, district or combination of streets, that did not offer homes. The employees of the Bristol Branches of the Imperial Tobacco Company and Messrs. H. J. Packer and Company gave up their sports pavilions, and in the former the Imperial Company maintained 100 refugees, while in the latter fifty were maintained by Messrs. Packer. The employees of many firms made a weekly collection, and contributed either to the general fund or to the support of a family. Harvest thanksgivings



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were sent in, and many gifts were made of fruit, food, and clothing. The difficulties of administration were overcome by voluntary workers. Ladies in rotation acted as house-keepers. A French nursing sister gave valuable help as an interpreter, others attended from day to day in the parcels office receiving and acknowledging parcels. Only one death occurred in the Victoria Square homes. "Uncle Jack," of the *Times and Mirror*, undertook an Emblem Day in aid of the destitute Belgians, and a sum exceeding £1,350 was thus raised. Abundant gifts of provisions were received from Queensland. The Labour Exchange dealt so ably with the employment question that few male Belgians were left unemployed. In February, 1915, Major Richard was sent by the Belgian Government to persuade men of suitable age to enlist. A military commission sat at Temple Meads, and took all men who were eligible.

Flemish priests were placed by the Bishop of Clifton in charge of their fellow-countrymen, and conducted services for them in various parts of the Bristol District. Visits to the city were paid by Bishop De Wachter, Auxiliary Bishop to Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, and on another occasion by Count Goblet d'Alviella, a Minister of the Crown. Count Goblet d'Alviella reported that Bristol was the first place he had visited without receiving a single complaint. The Bristol Education Committee made arrangements for the children to attend their schools, while in secondary education St. Joseph's Academy gave free tuition to about fifty children and the Christian Brothers' College to about sixty. The University started classes for teaching English, a facility which was much valued.

While everything possible was done for the spiritual, intellectual, and material welfare of the refugees efforts also were made to enliven and to cheer them. A Christmas Tree party, attended by about 600, was given on New Year's Day at the Pro-Cathedral Hall. Every week a social evening at the Pro-Cathedral Hall was arranged by the Catholic Women's League. Nor was the care of the Committee confined to their own guests. Frequently came telegrams from Folkestone asking the Committee to meet and give food to trainloads of refugees on their way to Devonshire. Ladies



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were in attendance, and dispensed sandwiches, buns, or hot milk to perhaps 800 or 900 hungry travellers.

Such is a brief summary of the various beneficial organisations which the needs of our Belgian guests called into being. It only remains to notice the events which took place when the victory of the Allies made it possible for them to return to their own country. First, there was the impressive service at the Pro-Cathedral on Sunday, January 12th, 1919, at which the Lord Mayor and the Sheriff of Bristol were present. The preacher was Father Moors, a Belgian priest who had been imprisoned by the Germans for 100 days.

The next notable event was the presentation of the Memorial Tablet by the Belgians to the Lord Mayor of Bristol at the Municipal School of Art, Queen's Road. His Lordship gladly accepted the tablet, and expressed the hope that the efforts made by the people of Bristol to help the Belgians "would show in some small degree their high esteem for the noble Belgian nation."

The final event was the happy scene at Temple Meads Station on Saturday, February 15th, 1919, when 700 Belgians, including 100 children born in Bristol, left by special train for Tilbury Dock, London, to embark for Antwerp. Many were the fervent farewells and expressions of gratitude for the hospitality and comfort showered on them by the Committee and helpers and hosts, numbers of whom were present to wish returning exiles God-speed on their journey. Canon Lee, who shepherded his large flock of Flemings, went with them to Tilbury Docks and saw them safe aboard. A fortnight later the remaining refugees left for Ostend.

On the occasion of the first departure the Lord Mayor (Alderman H. W. Twiggs) sent the following letter to Canon Lee :—

"I find it will be impossible for me to be at the railway station on Saturday morning to wish our Belgian friends good-bye. Will you please convey to them my good wishes for their future happiness? After four years' exile from their beloved country, they are returning to see the effects of war, but they will have the knowledge that the forces of oppression have been crushed by the valour and courage of the Allied armies. They will enjoy the freedom which



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has been made secure for them and in which they will work out their own destinies. I sincerely hope that the ravages of war may soon be removed, and that their gallant country may once more become strong and prosperous with a strength and prosperity in which all those who have found a home in Bristol may fully share."

In an unprecedented emergency Bristol showed its splendid mettle. Its answer to the cry of a nation in distress was worthy of its Christian character. As a sign of his hearty appreciation of the work of the General and of the Executive Committees and their helpers His Majesty the King of the Belgians has been pleased to confer on Mrs. Cyril Norwood and on Miss Lena Smith the *Médaille de la Reine Elizabeth*, and upon Colonel Whitwill and Canon Lee, the Chairmen respectively of the General and of the Executive Committee, the rank of *Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Couronne*.

## THE BOY SCOUTS.

Never was the motto and watchward of the Boy Scouts Association "Be Prepared" better exemplified than in August, 1914, when war broke upon the country like a thief in the night. Within forty-eight hours of that outbreak the Boy Scouts of the British Isles had been mobilised, and in less than a month they were giving most energetic and intelligent help in all kinds of service. In the words of the Prime Minister, "The boyhood of the country as represented by the Boy Scouts Association shares the laurels for having been prepared with the old and tried and trusted Army and Navy."

Early in 1915 notices were issued in the Press asking for the services of Sea Scouts to assist in the work of coast-watching. The Bristol Boy Scouts Association immediately responded, and in February three contingents of Sea Scouts proceeded to Cornwall and were quartered at Penzance, Newlyn and Mousehole respectively. The Scouts, who occupied cottages formerly used by the Coast-guards, received a small allowance of fuel, food and lights, but had to make their own arrangements for cooking, cleaning and other duties of a domestic character. Those quartered at Penzance and Newlyn were chiefly engaged



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in the examination of the shipping entering and leaving the harbours, while those at Mousehole had to patrol and watch long lines of the coast. The duties were always very arduous, and in times of rough weather, gales and fogs the patrolling of cliffs like those in Cornwall was very dangerous, but happily no serious accidents occurred, and the health of the boys was excellent. Although the coast watchers were not fortunate enough to help in the capture of any German submarines or mines, they had the satisfaction of rounding up several suspicious persons and handing them over to the authorities. The Sea Scouts remained on duty in Cornwall for many months and subsequently took on work at other stations on the south coast.

Early in the war the Royal Naval Coast-guard Signallers at the Signal Station at Walton Bay were drafted off to their units, and the station until the termination of hostilities was left entirely in charge of Sea Scouts from the Bristol Association, all being under military age. The importance of this work cannot be over-estimated when it is recognised that every ship passing up or down the Bristol Channel had to be communicated with, and the information obtained forwarded by telephone to the authorities. Over 50,000 messages, many of the greatest importance, must have been sent and received by these young boys.

In an almost endless variety of ways the Bristol Boy Scouts rendered valuable service at home, there being scarcely any organisation or movement in which their aid was not sought and readily and efficiently rendered. They assisted in guarding tunnels, bridges and water supplies. They raised £70 by a day's work for a Boy Scout Ambulance, and 600 of them were assigned specific work in case of an air raid on the city.



## Chapter VI

### The Work of the Port







## CHAPTER VI

### THE WORK OF THE PORT

AVONMOUTH USED FOR MILITARY TRANSPORT—SHIPS, PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL—BUSY TIMES—HOSPITAL SHIPS AND WOUNDED—HORSES AND MULES—MEAT AND COLD STORAGE—WORN-OUT RUBBER TYRES—NEW STORES FOR MEAT—PORTISHEAD AND PETROL—DIFFICULTIES IN DEALING WITH COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC—SHIPBUILDING AND REPAIR—DEMANDS ON THE STAFF OF THE DOCKS COMMITTEE—SHIPS OVER 500 FEET IN LENGTH—PORT LABOUR COMMITTEE—TRANSPORT COMMITTEES—REGIONAL SHIPPING COMMITTEE—CANTEEN FACILITIES AT AVONMOUTH AND PORTISHEAD DOCKS.

It had been recognised that with the opening of the Royal Edward Dock in 1908 the modern facilities provided at Avonmouth would be of great advantage if this country ever became involved in war. The capabilities of Avonmouth Docks for embarking troops and loading war materials were duly tested by the authorities and found satisfactory. As soon as war was imminent Avonmouth became the scene of great military activities, and the docks played an important part with regard to transport operations throughout the war.

During the early days of August, 1914, several thousand men were mobilised at Avonmouth, and the whole of the organising and equipping were carried out on the dock premises. Motor vehicles of all descriptions were collected from various parts of the United Kingdom, and large convoys of motor lorries were to be seen daily passing through the streets of Bristol *en route* for Avonmouth Docks, where they were driven alongside transports, lifted on board by cranes, and conveyed overseas.

A Mechanical Transport Depot was established at the docks, and for two and a half years Avonmouth was the principal port for the embarkation of motor vehicles. The dock passenger stations were taken for the use of the depot, and in addition numerous workshops were erected. Avonmouth Docks were also very largely used for the shipment of military stores of all



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kinds, and during the first three months after the outbreak of war, viz. August, September and October, 1914, the ships dealt with on behalf of the War Office and the personnel and quantities of material embarked and disembarked were as follow :—

Number of ships .. .. .	113
Personnel.. .. .	1,333
Vehicles .. .. .	2,569
Tonnage of goods .. .. .	29,148

The figures of war traffic for each complete year of the war were :—

### *First Year.*

Number of ships .. .. .	654
Personnel.. .. .	147,956
Horses and mules .. .. .	156,091
Vehicles .. .. .	23,441
Tonnage of goods .. .. .	321,406

### *Second Year.*

Number of ships .. .. .	677
Personnel.. .. .	2,388
Horses and mules .. .. .	109,485
Vehicles .. .. .	15,836
Tonnage of goods .. .. .	507,405

### *Third Year.*

Number of ships .. .. .	531
Personnel.. .. .	11,583
Horses and mules .. .. .	51,609
Vehicles .. .. .	10,284
Tonnage of goods .. .. .	559,992

### *Fourth Year.*

Number of ships .. .. .	305
Personnel.. .. .	41,410
Horses and mules .. .. .	22,416
Vehicles .. .. .	1,605
Tonnage of goods .. .. .	370,252



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From August, 1914, up to the signing of the Peace Treaty, 2,282 ships on war service were dealt with at the port.

The work of loading ships with material was continuous during the whole period of the war, but in addition certain special operations in connection with the movements of large bodies of troops were carried out. On Sunday, January 10th, 1915, six vessels of a gross tonnage of 58,350 tons arrived, containing the details and families of the Indian divisions which had been sent straight to France on the outbreak of war, consisting of 6,792 officers and men, 2,911 women and children, and a very considerable quantity of baggage and stores, requiring 24 trains to remove them to their destination. Several movements of this nature severely taxed the resources of the docks. In the four days February 7th to 11th, 1915, a division consisting of 17,973 officers and men, 5,061 horses, and material and equipment were brought in 92 trains and loaded in 19 vessels. Between February 27th and March 1st a contingent of the Royal Naval Division, consisting of 7,995 officers and men and 1,168 horses, was brought in 31 trains and loaded in 7 vessels. Similar movements were made of 22 troopships between March 15th and 22nd, 18 troopships between April 7th and 14th, and 17 troopships between June 13th and 21st. The total numbers dealt with during the year 1915 were 118 troopships, 550 trains, and 154,960 personnel. During March and April, 1915, a Canadian contingent consisting of 9,391 officers and men arrived in 6 vessels and disembarked at Avonmouth.

From February, 1917, to July, 1918, the port was regularly used by hospital ships bringing wounded from the Mediterranean, and altogether 24,048 patients were disembarked at Avonmouth and conveyed directly from the ships by ambulance trains to military hospitals in various parts of the country. In addition 13,000 convalescent Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans were sent home from Avonmouth. Altogether 65 hospital ships and 250 ambulance trains were dealt with.

Early in August, 1914, officers of the Army Service Corps came to the docks and took possession of some of the principal transit sheds for the establishment of a Base Supply Depot, which was utilised as a distributing centre of army stores for



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overseas and home forces. The occupation of these sheds by the military authorities seriously interfered with the discharge of foodstuffs and other importations, and eventually the War Office erected sheds, covering several acres, for their own use, and released the majority of the transit sheds for their legitimate purposes.

In addition to the actual embarkation and landing of troops and war stores, the docks have been largely used for other purposes connected with the war. The establishment of the Base Supply and Mechanical Transport Depots has already been referred to. The extensive use of caterpillar tractors led to the establishment of a Tractor Depot with a large staff, which occupied some 50 acres of the Dock Estate. The dry docks and ship repairing establishments were very largely used for the repairs of both transports and fighting ships, and fifty vessels carrying the white ensign passed through the docks for repairs. The vessels included the cruiser *Cornwall*, which came to Avonmouth for repairs after the Falklands battle, and other big warships. A number of armed merchant cruisers also made use of Avonmouth Docks as a revictualling and refitting base.

A notable feature was the large import of horses and mules from America, consigned to the Remount Depot at Shirehampton. During the first two years of war 265,576 passed through the docks, and the numbers for the total period were 339,601.

Extensive use was also made by the Government of the Cold Stores which are situated at the dock side. For a long time these stores were monopolised for army purposes to the exclusion of commercial traffic, and large stocks of meat were held at Avonmouth for supplying troops stationed in the South and South-West of England. After the Government took control of meat for civilian requirements the stores were largely used by the Ministry of Food, and the accommodation and facilities which these stores afforded were greatly appreciated.

For a long time Bristol has held a prominent position as an importing centre for refrigerated produce, and prior to the war this trade had so increased that additional accommodation was necessary. In 1914 Parliamentary sanction had been obtained for the erection of new large cold stores at Avonmouth, but the



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outbreak of hostilities stopped for a time the construction of these stores. In 1917, however, the demand for further cold storage accommodation throughout the country became imperative, and the Docks Committee were urgently requested by the Ministry of Food to proceed with the completion of the new Avonmouth stores, the Ministry undertaking to provide the necessary licences and priority certificates for the supply of materials. The work was at once taken in hand, and on completion these stores not only added to the trade of the port, but will be of great national benefit in conserving stocks of perishable food supplies in the country.

Large quantities of worn-out rubber tyres were returned to Avonmouth from France and other places, and the Ministry of Munitions erected works for the salvage of rubber. Several acres of land were occupied by the storage of old tyres returned from France pending treatment for the salvage of the rubber.

At the instance of the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies, large sheds covering 6 acres of land were erected for the storage of grain, and gave much needed relief to the greatly over-taxed storage accommodation at Avonmouth.

Portishead Dock also shared in the war activities. For a long time the dock was a main depot for the supply of petrol spirit for mechanical transport and aviation purposes in France. A large canning establishment was installed, and the tankage accommodation was greatly increased. For several years work was carried on day and night, discharging bulk spirit into the tanks and loading case spirit into transports. During the war period the imports in bulk amounted to 116,000,000 gallons, and the exports of the case and bulk spirit to 72,000,000 gallons. Large consignments of petrol were also despatched by railway to inland centres for military purposes.

All this work necessarily interfered with the use of the docks for commercial purposes, and during the first two years, while the trade of the country was brisk, it undoubtedly caused the diversion of a considerable amount of traffic which would otherwise have reached the port. On the other hand, the experience of owners and commanders of the large troopships, who had previously been somewhat shy of the navigation of the Bristol Channel, but who found it practicable to enter and leave the docks under very trying conditions without a single



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serious accident, must have tended to propagate widely a knowledge of the great advantages offered by the port for ocean trade.

As regards commercial traffic, the imports naturally fluctuated to a considerable extent, but notwithstanding the difficulties of dealing with both war and commercial trade in the same docks (such difficulties existed at only a few ports in the country, because as a rule those ports at which war services were carried on were appropriated entirely for those purposes and all commercial traffic was excluded), it can be stated that the interests of commercial customers were not neglected.

The prolongation of hostilities and the dearth of ships available for commercial traffic led to drastic restrictions of imports, and for a long time very little besides food cargoes and material for war purposes arrived at the docks.

Bristol has long been regarded as one of the principal ports in the country for the importation and distribution of grain and foodstuffs, and throughout the war the advantages which the port afforded for handling this traffic, together with its geographical position, were fully recognised by authorities responsible for the food supply of the country. Although there was some falling-off in the total quantities imported as compared with pre-war times, it may be stated that the quantity of provisions imported during the last year of the war constituted a record for the port, which fully maintained its position as a food distributing centre.

Many difficulties had, of course, to be contended with in handling commercial traffic. The demands made by the military authorities upon the shed accommodation and the priority claimed for war operations caused some dislocation to ordinary trade. The submarine warfare against merchant vessels caused the Admiralty to adopt the convoy system for the better protection of ships. This resulted in the very intermittent arrivals of cargoes, and instead of a regular flow of trade, a glut of traffic, which taxed to the utmost the resources of the port, was often followed by a very slack period.

After discharge of cargoes difficulties were experienced in distributing the goods. The supply of railway trucks was frequently inadequate, while vessels engaged in coastwise trades



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were gradually withdrawn from these services. Although efforts were made to extend the use of the canals, the strain of distributing goods fell heaviest upon the railways, and it was at times impossible to avoid delays in despatch. Another difficulty was the shortage of labour, especially at busy periods. Although it was recognised by the authorities that recruiting among transport workers must be more limited than in other callings, there was a continuous demand for men for the Forces, and the supply of labour was often below requirements.

The interference with the near continental and coastwise trades owing to the war greatly reduced the traffic at the City Docks. The importation of grain, timber, sugar and iron at these docks dropped to insignificant proportions, and there was nothing to take its place. Since the Armistice, however, this trade has shown signs of revival, and it is evident that the City Docks will in time again play an important part in the progress of the port.

Similarly at Portishead the war affected the commercial trade which was carried on there, and there was a substantial fall in the grain and timber imports. This, however, was compensated for by the imports of petrol for the Government.

Shipbuilding and repair are dealt with in another part of this book, but it may be stated that the fine Corporation graving dock at Avonmouth was in constant use, and provided accommodation for some of the largest vessels afloat.

In addition to the activities already noted, the docks contributed their quota to the fighting forces. From the commencement of hostilities men employed at the docks in every capacity readily responded to the call to the Colours, and although the exact figures are not available, it may be stated that men enlisted from the docks to the utmost limit consistent with national requirements, which necessitated the retention of certain skilled and experienced men to carry on the work of the docks. Of the Docks Committee's permanent staff of all grades 263 enlisted, 30 were reported killed or missing, and 44 were wounded. The distinctions gained were one Military Cross, two Distinguished Conduct Medals, two Military Medals, and one Meritorious Service Medal.

The dock system provided by the citizens of Bristol, equipped with every modern contrivance for handling the largest ocean-



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

going ships and for dealing with every description of traffic, has been of immense value to the nation. The facilities provided were found by H.M. Government to be of the highest importance, and it is satisfactory to record that they were duly appreciated by the departments concerned with the movements of troops and munitions of war. The enterprise of the citizens in providing such accommodation not only reflects credit upon the municipality, but has also demonstrated to the highest degree the capabilities of the port.

The strain of the war made great demands upon all sections of the staff, depleted as it was of so many of its most efficient members who had joined the Colours. The requirements of so many Government Departments necessitated frequent and delicate negotiations, and the establishment of numerous Committees, in all of which the Chairman of the Docks Committee, Alderman H. W. Twiggs (Lord Mayor of Bristol in 1919), took the leading part. For practically the whole period of the war Alderman Twiggs served on the following Committees, which were in almost continuous session: The Bristol Co-ordination Committee, established as its name implies to maintain the due co-ordination of the often conflicting demands of the military, naval and commercial departments; the Port Labour Committee, dealing with the exemption of dock workers from military service and the maintenance of a sufficient supply of labour in the port; and a Committee to advise on the employment of military labour in time of shortage of civilian workers.

During the war the public were not allowed to know much of the work of the port, it being feared that the information might prove of use to the enemy. In his report to the Docks Committee for the year ended April 30th, 1919, the General Manager gave the following list of steamships over 500 feet in length that entered Avonmouth Docks after August, 1914:—

						Gross Tonnage.	Length.
<i>Rotterdam</i>	..	..	Holland Amerika Line	..	..	24,149	650.5
<i>Ceramic</i>	..	..	White Star Line	..	..	18,481	655.1
<i>Megantic</i>	..	..	do.	..	..	14,878	550.4
<i>Suevic</i>	..	..	do.	..	..	12,531	550.2
<i>Georgic</i>	..	..	do.	..	..	10,077	558.7



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		Gross Tonnage.	Length.
<i>Franconia</i> .. ..	Cunard Line .. .. .	18,150	600.3
<i>Ivernia</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	14,278	528.0
<i>Alaunia</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	13,405	520.3
<i>Andania</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	13,405	520.3
<i>Ultonia</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	10,402	500.0
<i>Almanzora</i> .. ..	Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. ..	16,034	570.0
<i>Andes</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	15,620	570.3
<i>Araguaya</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	10,537	515.2
<i>Aragon</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	9,588	513.2
<i>Cardiganshire</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	9,426	500.3
<i>Ulysses</i> .. ..	China Mutual Steam Nav. Co. ..	14,499	563.2
<i>Minnewaska</i> .. ..	Atlantic Transport Co. .. ..	14,317	600.3
<i>Minneapolis</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	13,543	600.7
<i>Minnetonka</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	13,528	600.7
<i>Edinburgh Castle</i> .. ..	Union Castle Mail S.S. Co. ..	13,326	570.2
<i>Llandovery Castle</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	11,423	500.1
<i>Llanstephan Castle</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	11,293	500.5
<i>Kildonan Castle</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	9,692	515.3
<i>Missanabie</i> .. ..	Canadian Pacific Ocean Ser. Ltd.	12,469	500.6
<i>Shropshire</i> .. ..	Federal Steam Navigation .. ..	12,184	526.4
<i>Northumberland</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	12,160	530.5
<i>Wiltshire</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	10,390	526.5
<i>Orvieto</i> .. ..	Orient Steam Navigation .. ..	12,130	535.3
<i>Argyllshire</i> .. ..	Scottish Shire Line .. .. .	12,097	526.2
<i>Haverford</i> .. ..	International Nav. Co. .. ..	11,635	531.0
<i>Corsican</i> .. ..	Allan Line .. .. .	11,419	500.3
<i>Virginian</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	10,757	520.4
<i>Victorian</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	10,635	520.0
<i>Tunisian</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	10,576	500.3
<i>Hororaia</i> .. ..	New Zealand Shipping Co. Ltd...	11,243	511.1
<i>Royal George</i> .. ..	Canadian Northern S.S. Co. ..	11,146	525.8
<i>Royal Edward</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	11,117	526.1
<i>Berrima</i> .. ..	Peninsular & Oriental S. N. Co...	11,137	500.1
<i>Moldavia</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	9,500	520.6
<i>Winifredian</i> .. ..	Leyland Line .. .. .	10,422	552.5
<i>Cestrian</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	8,912	512.5
<i>Armenian</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	8,825	512.5
<i>Victorian</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	8,825	512.5
<i>San Melito</i> .. ..	Eagle Oil Transport Co. .. ..	10,160	530.0
<i>San Nazario</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	10,064	525.5
<i>San Patricio</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	9,712	530.0
<i>Silver Lip</i> .. ..	Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. .. ..	9,718	530.2
<i>Wayfarer</i> .. ..	Charente Steamship Co. .. ..	9,599	505.0
<i>Irishman</i> .. ..	British & North Atlantic S.S. Co.	9,530	500.7
<i>Canada</i> .. ..	do. .. .. .	9,415	500.4
<i>Narragansett</i> .. ..	Anglo-American Oil Co. .. ..	9,196	512.0
<i>Star of Victoria</i> .. ..	Commonwealth & Dominion Line	9,152	501.3
<i>Maidan</i> .. ..	T. & J. Brocklebank Ltd. ..	8,205	500.0
<i>Caledonia</i> .. ..	Henderson Bros. .. .. .	9,225	500.0



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

The Board of Trade found it necessary to certify that dock transport work was of national importance within the meaning of Section 2 of the Military Service Act of 1916, and that certificates of exemption should be granted by the Board of Trade to persons employed upon or in connection with such work. They therefore established in the principal ports Committees for this purpose, and in June, 1916, the first meeting of the Bristol Port Labour Committee was held. The members of the Committee were as follow: Mr. D. Ross-Johnson, General Manager Bristol Docks (Chairman); Alderman H. W. Twiggs (Chairman of the Docks Committee), representing the Employers' Labour Association; Mr. H. Wynne Jones, representing the Steamship Owners' Association; Mr. E. Bevin, Mr. T. Cogan, Mr. A. C. Barnard, representing the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union; Captain Lucas, R.N., Naval Transport Officer, representing the Naval Authorities; Sir Frank Wills, representing the Military Authorities. It was the duty of the Committee to receive and investigate all applications for exemption from persons connected with transport work in the port, and also to consider any other question affecting the supply of labour in the port. The Committee before granting exemptions took a very careful census both of the supply of labour and also the demand, and throughout the war was very zealous in seeing that both the military and industrial needs were met.

In January, 1917, a scheme for recording the employment of all persons engaged in the port was inaugurated. Each man was furnished with a "Record of Employment" book, which had to be presented to his employer daily. The books lasted over a period of three months, and without a book no person could obtain employment at the docks. This system was unique to Bristol, and was of immense value to the Committee. It showed how loyally the men employed in the port of Bristol worked, and how they realised that the work on which they were employed was of supreme national importance. The following statistics for 21 months ended September, 1918, are extracted from the books in question, and give a record of which the Port of Bristol should be proud. These figures embrace all men under the scheme, including men up to the age of 75 years:—



## THE WORK OF THE PORT

Average number of men employed.	Aggregate maximum number of working days.	Aggregate number of days worked on transport work.	Percentage of days worked.
4,298	2,237,122	1,818,093	81%

In addition 31,071 aggregate Sundays and Bank Holidays were worked, and 27,934 aggregate days were lost through certified sickness. Many transport workers were employed upon other work of national importance during temporary slackness in the port, amounting in the aggregate to thousands of working days. It must be borne in mind that under the convoy system there were periods when there was enforced idleness for practically the whole of the transport workers, whilst at other times there was a glut of shipping in the port.

At the time of the Armistice there was some doubt as to whether there was any need for the Bristol Port Labour Committee to continue their duties, but at the request of the Minister of Labour, who pointed out the vital importance of the Committee continuing activities, especially in view of the need of regularising employment in the port, it was decided to maintain the Committee.

On March 31st, 1919, the "Record of Employment" books were exchanged for the Tally System, and the size of the Committee was increased.

Throughout the war the problem of transport was of paramount importance. One of the very first war measures was the taking over of the railways by the Government, and later ships, canals, and practically all other means of transport came directly under Government control. The one important exception was the docks, which remained under the management of the locally-constituted authorities. Under the stress of war conditions transport difficulties were soon in evidence, and at the end of 1914 congestion at various ports throughout the country was already causing anxiety, especially at Avonmouth Docks, which were dealing with both military and commercial traffic.



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

In January, 1915, an Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives of the principal ports, under the chairmanship of Lord Inchcape, were appointed by the Board of Trade to consider the question of traffic at docks. The port of Bristol was represented on the Committee by Mr. D. Ross-Johnson, General Manager of the Docks. After taking evidence the Committee reported, and made important recommendations for dealing with ocean traffic in war exigencies.

During 1915 the continued withdrawal of men from ordinary civilian occupations for the Forces, shortage of ships, and the depletion of railway rolling stock, accentuated the difficulties of transport, and in November, 1915, the Cabinet decided to merge the Advisory Committee into an executive body, who were called the Port and Transit Executive Committee. This Committee, which consisted of representatives of War Departments and dock and shipping interests, were given powers under the Defence of the Realm Act, and were responsible for maintaining the normal flow of traffic through the ports.

The Committee made orders from time to time dealing with the difficulties which arose owing to the abnormal conditions, and the assistance so rendered to dock authorities was of inestimable value at a time of national emergency.

In order to secure the co-operation of the various interests using the port of Bristol, a local Committee was formed in 1916, under the ægis of the Port and Transport Executive Committee. This Committee, called the Avonmouth Co-ordination Committee, consisted of representatives of the Naval and Military Authorities, Docks Committee, Shipowners and Dock Workers, and its object was to ensure the maximum use of the docks in the national interests. The Committee, under the Chairmanship of Sir Edward B. James, did most useful work, and on dissolution in February, 1919, the Chairman and members were specially thanked for their efforts, which had been greatly appreciated by the parent body.

During the submarine menace it was of vital importance that no avoidable delay should occur in the discharge of ships, and in order to supplement civilian labour at times of great pressure Transport Workers' Battalions were recruited. These men were available when port traffic was too heavy to be dealt with by local labour, and were employed during 1918 as occasion



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arose at Avonmouth and the City Docks to expedite the discharge of food and other cargoes. A local Committee was formed to deal with matters relating to the employment of the Transport Workers' Battalion.

To ensure the fullest and most economical use of transport facilities, and obtain the co-ordination of all parties, local Committees were appointed to deal with (1) the allocation and working of water transport in the Bristol Channel; (2) the provision of coastwise transport to relieve railways; (3) exemption of transport workers and clerical and supervising staffs from military service; (4) the best utilisation of road transport. The docks were represented on these Committees by the Chairman, Alderman H. W. Twiggs, and the General Manager, Mr. D. Ross-Johnson.

The Regional Shipping Committee, the third of these committees, were set up by the Ministry of National Service during 1918, for the purpose of adjudicating on the staffs of various shipping companies. It is only fair to mention that the shipping companies had in the earlier days of recruiting surrendered the largest possible number of men consistent with carrying on the shipping work, and therefore when this Regional Shipping Committee was instituted there was little or no material to be obtained for military service; they therefore tended to become an Exemption Committee, protecting those men who were vital to the national interests in connection with the work of shipping.

The necessity of providing adequate facilities for feeding the large number of dock workers employed at Avonmouth had become very pressing at the commencement of the war, and as the result of a conference held in the summer of 1915 between representatives of the Docks Committee, the Dockers' Union, the Employers of Labour at the Port, and the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic), it was decided to erect a temporary canteen at the Gloucester Road Dock Gates, Avonmouth, pending the provision at a later date of a more permanent structure.

The Central Control Board eventually undertook to provide a canteen building of a semi-permanent character which when completed was opened by Lord D'Abernon, the Chairman of the Central Control Board, on August 13th, 1915, a little over



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a month from the date on which the work was commenced. It was agreed that the building should be taken over by the Docks Committee under terms arranged with the Central Control Board, at some date after the close of the war. The management of the canteen was to be undertaken by the parties interested in the work at the docks, and a Committee of eight members were accordingly formed, representing the following interests :—Docks Committee, two representatives ; Dockers' Union, two representatives ; and the Shipowners, Stevedores, Dock Clerks, and Dock Foremen one representative each. Alderman E. M. Dyer was appointed Chairman of this Committee, and has been re-elected to that position each year.

Accommodation is provided in the main hall of the canteen for about 600 men, and separate rooms at each end of the building will seat about 80 clerks and the same number of foremen and chargemen. Meals and refreshments of good quality and at low prices are served from 6.30 a.m. onward each day, the present price for hot dinners (meat and two vegetables) in the main hall being 10d. The price was originally 6d. for this meal, but was by stages increased up to 10d. to meet the higher cost of commodities and working expenses.

During the war period the Canteen Committee undertook the management of an additional canteen, situated near the Royal Edward Graving Dock, and also two canteens at the Portishead Dock, lighter classes of refreshments only being served at these canteens.

The increasing use made by the dock workers of the canteens has amply justified their provision, the number of meals of all classes sold during the last two years amounting to about half a million per annum. The receipts during four completed financial years ended September 30th have been as follow : 1916, £4,895 ; 1917, £10,817 ; 1918, £14,580 ; 1919, £15,210.

The canteens are entirely self-supporting, the prices charged being sufficient to cover all expenses of the business on a commercial basis.



## Chapter VII

### Sailors and Ships







## CHAPTER VII

### SAILORS AND SHIPS

GALLANTRY OF THE MERCANTILE MARINE—PROTECTING THE BRISTOL CHANNEL—ENEMY SUBMARINES AND MINES—WALTON BAY SIGNALLING STATION—EXAMINATION OF ARRIVING VESSELS—SERVICES AND FATE OF VESSELS CONNECTED WITH THE PORT—THE MINE-SWEEPING FLEET—HOSPITAL SHIPS ATTACKED.

No record of the part played by the city in the Great War would be complete without telling of the services rendered by the men who sailed from the port during the strenuous period between 1914 and 1918. Next to the fighting forces the nation undoubtedly owes more to our merchant seamen than to any other section of the community, and the special acknowledgment by Parliament of their heroic and self-denying services found a ready echo in the heart of the nation. The crews of our merchant ships have in normal times a hazardous vocation, but with the advent of war the risks and dangers to which they were exposed were increased a thousandfold. Notwithstanding the atrocities committed by the Germans upon the high seas in deliberate disregard of International Law, coupled with a callous and brutal indifference as to the fate of their victims, our seamen continued their calling undaunted and undeterred, and without their aid it would have been impossible to have brought the war to a successful conclusion. The failure of the campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare was in no small degree due to the mercantile marine, who by their determination and courage successfully frustrated the design of Germany to bring about our capitulation through our inability to obtain supplies of foodstuffs for our population or to convey troops and war material overseas. Not even when the prolongation of the war and their own desperate straits caused the German authorities to intensify this nefarious method of warfare against civilians, and to give orders to



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"Sink without trace," did our seamen falter for one moment, and no ship was ever detained through inability to find a crew. It is known that over 15,000 of these brave men met their death while pursuing their peaceful and lawful calling, whilst others endured unspeakable hardships and suffering. The story of their devotion to duty makes one of the grandest epics of the war.

Since mediæval times Bristol has furnished men and ships for the merchant service, and as a seaport has to deplore the loss of many of its brave citizens, who were drowned as a result of enemy mines or submarine attacks upon the ships in which they were serving.

Precautions of every conceivable kind were undertaken by the Royal Navy to protect as far as possible ships engaged in carrying cargoes and passengers. The convoy system was adopted, and merchant vessels were armed for defensive purposes, whilst the movements of all ships were under the control of the naval authorities, who obtained information as to the presence of enemy craft and mines, warned merchant ships in the locality and diverted them from dangerous areas. The co-operation between the two services was a most noteworthy feature.

The entrance to the Bristol Channel was notorious for submarine activities, and many ships bound for this port never arrived owing to enemy depredations. Inside the Channel the Admiralty mosquito fleet was continually flying from one side to the other, watching and waiting for the foe, and yet the enemy succeeded in laying a number of mines. These were, however, soon discovered and promptly cleared by mine-sweepers. Whenever a submarine was known to be in the neighbourhood, or mines were discovered, all outward-bound ships were held up in Walton Bay or Barry Roads until a safe course could be given, and immediately the captains received their orders to proceed the ships sailed without delay or hesitation.

A signalling station which was erected by the dock authorities at Walton Bay a few months before the outbreak of war was particularly useful in this respect, and was largely used in controlling the movements of shipping in the Channel. The station was first manned by ex-Yeomen of Signals of the



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Royal Navy, who were, however, soon called up for service afloat, and the breach was filled by Bristol Sea Scouts, who undertook the signalling and look-out throughout the war, and performed their duty well. In their keenness they reported at times to the Portishead battery the passing of suspicious objects making their way towards the docks, only to find later that the guns had been brought into action to shell a floating tree, lumber or wreckage. Still, it proved that the men were on the alert, and it also provided practice for the guns. On a dark night a submarine with only a small part above the water is hard to distinguish, and the look-out and gunners left nothing to chance.

As far as is known no enemy craft got eastward of the Holmes, and it is recorded with satisfaction that not a single accident of serious note happened to any ship within the limits of the port.

One of the precautions taken in the early days of the war was the institution of an examination service in the Bristol Channel. This service was undertaken by the dock authorities under the instructions of the War Office, with the object of arresting enemy aliens and making sure that the ships' papers and cargoes were in order. Two Bristol vessels were employed, the *Bristol Scout* and the mission yacht *Eirene*. The *Eirene* was lent to the Admiralty by the Rev. Norman de Jersey, at that time Chaplain to the Missions to Seamen, and now Bishop of the Falkland Islands. The examination of ships was conducted by the Haven Master, Commander C. F. Hart, R.N.R., and besides having to keep to sea in all winds and weather, the crew found that their duties were not altogether devoid of adventure. On one occasion they discovered a number of enemy aliens among the crew of a ship which had left her loading port before the declaration of war. Most of the men were quite peaceable and declared that they were not of the enemy, but one burly and powerful-looking German was the other way inclined, and would have given the crew of the *Eirene* a rough time if precautions had not been taken to place him under restraint.

One dark night in November, 1914, a neutral vessel came up at full speed and rammed the *Eirene* amidships, almost cutting her in two. The *Eirene* sank immediately, but the



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crew luckily escaped with their lives, although they received minor injuries.

A few brief notes on the services and fate of some vessels closely connected with the port will not be without interest. Prominently identified with the progress of the port in pre-war days were the two magnificent sister ships of the Royal Line, the *Royal Edward* and *Royal George*, both vessels being well known to travellers across the Atlantic for their speed and luxurious equipment. On the outbreak of war these steamers were requisitioned by the Admiralty, and were employed in the transport of troops, etc. The *Royal Edward* was unfortunately sunk by the enemy in the Mediterranean in August, 1915, with a deplorable loss of life. The sinking of this fine vessel, which had done so much to advance the prestige of the port, was keenly felt throughout the city. The *Royal George* continued to be employed as a transport during the war, and has a proud record of war service. On the cessation of hostilities she took her place under the Cunard flag in the passenger service between this country and New York. The Cunard Company rendered unique service during the war, having furnished cruisers, troopships, hospital ships, etc., from their fleets. Their losses in the war were serious, including the *Lusitania* and other famous liners. Of the vessels employed in their Avonmouth services, the *Flavia*, *Feltia* and *Folia* were sunk by the Germans.

The fine Atlantic cargo liner *Englishman* (5,257 tons), belonging to the Dominion Line, was torpedoed whilst on a voyage from Avonmouth to Canada. Other vessels belonging to this Company which are regular traders to the Avonmouth Docks were used for the conveyance of troops, horses, material and merchandise for civilian requirements.

The steamers running under the auspices of the Canadian Pacific Ocean Services Ltd., who maintain regular lines between Avonmouth and Canada, did excellent work in the conveyance of troops, munitions and foodstuffs, but this Company too suffered severe losses, including the well-known s.s. *Montfort*.

The Bristol-Australasian steamers were withdrawn from that trade early in the war. These vessels were found particularly useful, as they are especially adapted for the conveyance of perishable goods, and some were also employed



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as transports. The enemy submarines exacted a heavy toll among these fine steamers.

Messrs. Elders & Fyffes' modern liners, which in normal times are engaged in the carriage of bananas to this country—a trade which is specially identified with Bristol—have an exceptional record of war service. A large number of the Company's ships were requisitioned by the Navy for use as armed merchant cruisers, and took a leading part in the ceaseless watch for enemy craft and the protection of our merchant vessels. Their fleet was, however, seriously depleted by enemy depredations, no fewer than ten vessels, the *Bayano*, *Patia*, *Chagres*, *Aracataca*, *Tortuguero*, *Reventazon*, *Chirripo*, *Manistee*, *Miami*, and *Zent* having been destroyed, but with characteristic enterprise they took steps as soon as circumstances permitted to replace the lost ships.

The old-established Bristol firm of Messrs. Charles Hill & Sons were particularly unfortunate in their war losses. The *New York City* was sunk in August, 1915, the *Bristol City* in December, 1917, and the *Boston City* in January, 1918, whilst the *Kansas City*, which sailed from New York to Bristol in September, 1917, was never heard of afterwards, having been sunk by a mine or submarine with the loss of her entire crew. The *Chicago City* was attacked by guns and torpedoed six miles off Queenstown in May, 1917, but although badly damaged the vessel was by good seamanship brought into port. All these ships were well known locally, and their crews were largely drawn from Bristolians. Messrs. Hill's vessels rendered excellent service throughout the war both as transports and food carriers, and in addition the firm rapidly extended their shipbuilding activities, so that they not only replaced their losses from their own yards, but also were able to add other vessels to the depleted mercantile shipping of the country at a very critical period. Their work in this particular is described with more detail in the section dealing with local industries in war time.

A well-known local concern, the Bristol Steam Navigation Co. Ltd., who have for many years taken a prominent part in continental trade, lost three vessels, the *Argo*, *Pluto* and *Juno*, while the *Clio*, owned by this Company, and familiar to all Bristolians at her loading berth at the Broad Quay near St. Augustine's Bridge, was taken over by the Admiralty, filled



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with sand and cement, and sunk at the entrance to an east coast harbour for defensive purposes. The Company's s.s. *Sappho* was seized at Hamburg by the Germans and interned.

Messrs. Palgrave, Murphy & Co., of Dublin, whose steamers have been regular traders for many years between Bristol and North Sea ports, had a very unfortunate experience. Five of their ships, the *City of Hamburg*, *City of Cadiz*, *City of Belfast*, *City of Berlin*, and the *City of Munich*, were at Hamburg at the outbreak of hostilities, and were seized by the Germans and the crews interned. The *City of Berlin*, for some unknown reason, was sunk by the German authorities whilst in that port. In addition, the *City of Bremen* and *City of Swansea* were sunk by submarines. All these ships were frequent visitors to the port, and one or more of them were always to be seen at their loading and discharging berths at Dean's Marsh.

In the coasting trade the loss of many familiar vessels has to be recorded, of which the following may be noted :—

Liverpool and Manchester Lines	<i>Somerset Coast and Norfolk Coast.</i>
Glasgow and Belfast Line ..	<i>Afton and Tweed.</i>
London Line .. .. .	<i>Coath.</i>
Cork Line .. .. .	<i>Ardmore, Bandon, Lismore, Kenmore and Innisfallen.</i>
East Coast Line .. .. .	<i>Princess Olga, Princess Caroline and Princess Dagmar.</i>

All these ships were regular traders to the port, and their destruction, not infrequently accompanied by loss of life, was keenly regretted.

A reference must be made to the special war services of Messrs. P. & A. Campbell's steamers. These popular pleasure boats are in normal times engaged during the summer in conveying Bristolians in their thousands to various seaside resorts around the coast, and their popularity is not confined to this side of the Bristol Channel. There were thirteen steamers in the fleet, and all were requisitioned by the Admiralty. The first two to be fitted out were the *Devonia* and the *Brighton Queen*, which left Bristol on September 30th 1914. The

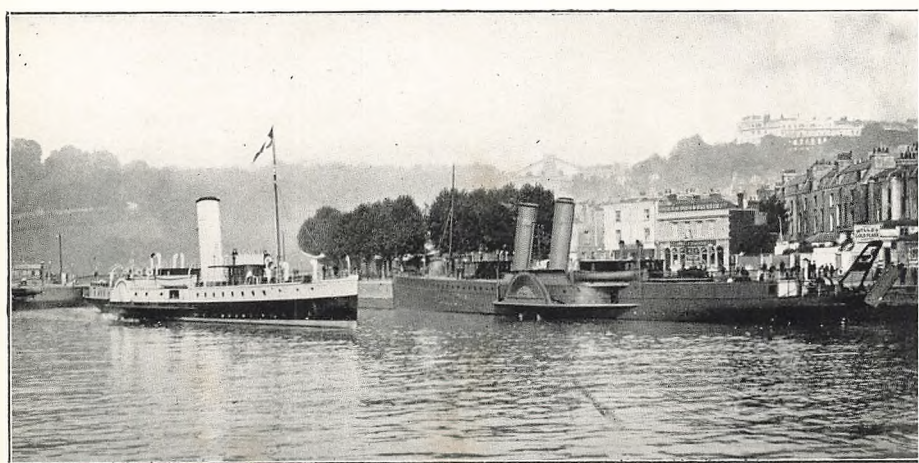








GERMAN SUBMARINE (U 86) IN FLOATING HARBOUR.



MESSRS. P. & A. CAMPBELL'S BOATS.

(a) AS PLEASURE BOAT.

(b) AS MINE-SWEEPER.



## SAILORS AND SHIPS

*Cambria*, *Westward Ho!* *Glen Avon*, and *Lady Ismay* soon followed, sailing on December 2nd of the same year. On February 5th, 1915, the *Britannia*, the flagship of the Bristol fleet, and the *Glen Usk* departed, followed on July 1st by the *Ravenswood* and *Albion*, the *Barry* leaving on July 24th. The last two, the *Waverley* and *Glen Rosa*, steamed away on May 30th, 1917. Unrecognisable in their drab coats of paint and the strange fittings necessary for the game of war, the ships rendered service in many waters, and though some had narrow escapes, only two were lost. The *Brighton Queen* was sunk on October 6th, 1915, and the *Lady Ismay*, one of the latest additions to the fleet, went down on December 21st following.

The *Britannia* and the *Glen Usk*, after sweeping for some time off the north-west coast of Ireland, patrolled the Firth of Clyde looking for submarines, and swept for mines in Lough Swilly, where H.M.S. *Audacious* was sunk. After a period of long-distance sweeping from Inishtrahull to Barra Head (Outer Hebrides), these paddle steamers were continually sweeping with the Grand Fleet until the end of March, 1919, when they returned to Glasgow for refitting. In the Moray Firth a mine in the kite on board the *Britannia* exploded, and pieces of the wreckage dropped all over her decks, while on many occasions splinters from exploded mines fell on board.

The *Waverley* and *Glen Rosa* first of all swept and patrolled westward of Ilfracombe, and later in the mouth of the River Thames. The *Ravenswood* and *Albion* was engaged in sweeping between Dover and Dunkirk; while the *Barry*, after many different war duties, did great service in the Dardanelles and the waters of the Mediterranean generally. The *Westward Ho!* the *Cambria* and the *Glen Avon* all played a valiant part in the mine-infested waters, and did their share in foiling the enemy's designs. These steamers were part of the *Devonia* unit, and saw much active service. They were bombed by aircraft as well as being shelled, and in 1915 broke the record in accounting for the greatest number of mines in a day's sweep in the North Sea area. This unit chased submarines, and one boat drove a mine-laying submarine on the sands, where she was captured. The guns occasionally had good practice in Zepp straffing, while the *Westward Ho!* and the *Glen Avon* assisted in the salvage of the L.15, brought down in the Thames. Transports



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on fire from torpedo attacks were assisted, and the unit eventually finished up by sweeping the estuary of the Thames. As was only fitting, after such a meritorious record of service, one of the Bristol pleasure steamers, the *Glen Usk*, did a trip to witness the surrender of the German Fleet.

It is worthy of note that when the vessels left the port of Bristol they were manned entirely by local men, and although two of the White Funnels blew up, the Bristol men aboard were rescued by their fellow-citizens aboard other paddle mine-sweepers. The war services of Bristol's flotilla ended as follows: *Albion*, February 15th, 1919; *Ravenswood*, March 5th, 1919; *Glen Avon*, March 11th, 1919; *Waverley*, March 17th, 1919; *Glen Rosa*, March 23rd, 1919; *Westward Ho!* April 1st, 1919; *Britannia*, April 8th, 1919; *Glen Usk*, April 11th, 1919; *Devonia*, May 2nd, 1919; *Cambria*, May 4th, 1919; and the last of all, the *Barry*, on September 27th, 1919. The owners have been able to resume the summer pleasure services, which have again proved immensely popular.

The wanton attacks by German submarines upon our hospital ships whilst on their errands of mercy, in flagrant contravention of all laws of humanity, profoundly shocked the susceptibilities of all civilised people, and caused a world-wide revulsion against the barbaric methods of warfare adopted by the German Government. Bristol has special cause to remember these outrages. On January 4th, 1918, the hospital ship *Rewa*, carrying sick and wounded, was nearing Avonmouth, displaying all the prescribed signs and signals to denote the character of her mission, when, without warning, she was torpedoed and commenced to sink rapidly. In this instance the sick and wounded were all saved and landed at Swansea, but several of the crew were drowned. A little later the hospital ship *Glenart Castle*, bound for Avonmouth, was torpedoed in exactly similar circumstances at the entrance to the Bristol Channel, resulting in the loss of 153 lives, including many helpless wounded. The hospital ship *Guildford Castle* was also attacked in the same vicinity, but fortunately she escaped undamaged. The fine royal mail liner *Asturias*, whilst on hospital service, was wrecked on the Cornish coast shortly after leaving this port. The hospital ship *Llandoverly Castle*, after taking home Canadian wounded, was returning to Avonmouth,



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when she was torpedoed. A large number of the crew and nursing staff lost their lives.

It is impossible to record the exploits of the Bristol mercantile marine in anything but brief and general terms within the limits of this short chapter. Suffice it to say in conclusion that as in times of national danger in past centuries Bristol was among the foremost in placing her resources at the service of the country, so the maritime traditions, of which the city has every reason to be proud, were again worthily upheld by her ships and her seamen in the Great War ; to-day by their endeavours the port stands with enhanced prestige. We pay a reverent tribute to our many seamen who sacrificed their lives in pursuit of their calling, and express our gratitude to those who survived the abounding perils of the seas during those anxious times.







## Chapter VIII

### Railway and Road Transport







## CHAPTER VIII

### RAILWAY AND ROAD TRANSPORT

EARLY PRECAUTIONS—A FAMOUS PORTER POET—MOBILISATION ARRANGEMENTS—BASE SUPPLY AT AVONMOUTH—HUNDREDS OF AMBULANCE TRAINS—THE CIVIL PASSENGER SERVICES—BLINDS DOWN—WOMEN WORKERS—15,000 WORKMEN DAILY FOR AVONMOUTH—TERMS OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF RAILWAYS—ROAD TRANSPORT—HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION—30,000 VEHICLES REGISTERED—GOOD RESULTS.

BRISTOL is the centre from which the railway organisation for an area of some 400 miles of railway line is directed. The stations and depots within the city are the most important in this area, and the Great Western have Divisional Officers for Traffic (Operating), Engineering, Locomotive and Goods (Commercial) Departments, whilst the Midland now have such an officer for their Goods Department only, their operating and other matters being dealt with from Derby. The principal Station (Temple Meads) is jointly used by the Great Western and Midland Companies. Both railways serve Avonmouth Docks, and during the war rolling stocks of all railways were to a large extent pooled. The Bristol Great Western divisional organisation includes about one-ninth of the total Great Western line, and in regard to railway working took an important part in the developments arising from war conditions.

The first special arrangements were made on Thursday, July 30th, 1914, when it was feared that war was approaching. At that period crowds of people were passing to the seaside holiday resorts. It was regarded as necessary to guard railway tunnels, bridges and certain important trunk lines, including the Avonmouth routes, and such arrangements were elaborated that on all the scheduled sections even the railway servants were only permitted to be on the railway lines when in possession of the proper military permit. These documents were changed from time to time, and any persons without permits were in



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

danger from the armed military guards until the general internment of enemy aliens had been accomplished.

When the war was officially declared there was a homeward rush by train from the seaside resorts, and the holiday traffic immediately assumed a different aspect. Excursion trains were cancelled, and other services were re-arranged to meet the sudden turn of affairs and provide for the first military and naval requirements connected with mobilisation. The War Office on August 4th announced that under an Order in Council and the Act of 1871 Government control of the railways would commence, and the General Managers of the Great Western (Mr. F. Potter) and Midland (Sir Guy Granet), the two railways serving Bristol, were appointed members of the new Railway Executive Committee. The mobilisation arrangements affecting the railways in and through Bristol rapidly developed, and the first large contingent of infantry, transport and supply columns, yeomanry and field ambulance assembled at Swindon, and were worked away from there in fifty-eight trains, closely following each other, to Oxford for points beyond. These destinations were not revealed even to the railway servants, in order to keep the movements secret. These fifty-eight trains carried troops and their complete equipment, and they were all dealt with on exact schedules agreed on the spot with a War Office representative on Sunday, August 16th, and very early on Monday morning, a section of the Bristol Divisional Office being established at Swindon to act in conjunction with Major Clarke from the War Office for the purpose.

It is interesting to record that on August 26th the *Daily Express* published the war poem entitled "The Day," by a local railway porter, Henry Chappell, of Bath. This poem immediately became famous throughout the British Empire.

The mobilisation arrangements became so exacting, and so much personal and special attention had to be given to them throughout the twenty-four hours, that Mr. Charles Kislingbury, who for twenty-two years had held the position of Great Western Bristol Divisional Superintendent, and who had already reached the retiring age, felt that he should give way to a younger man; he therefore resigned on October 9th, after having seen the initial war arrangements affecting the railway set well in



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motion. The Great Western Directors appointed Mr. H. R. Griffiths to succeed him. A re-organisation of the railway local executive staff had to be made, and from the day war was declared up to and after the Armistice a special office, under the Divisional Superintendent, was maintained by the Great Western; it was known as the "Military Office," and in it a small, experienced staff were on duty day and night (including Sundays) with telephonic connections established in all directions. This special office was in communication with the residences of the divisional officers and their assistants, who held secret instructions relating to railway services scheduled in advance to meet various descriptions of emergency. When the need arose, these anticipatory arrangements had to be put into operation at a moment's notice on receipt of code words from headquarters.

One of the first large matters dealt with at the Bristol railway centre was the conveyance of troops to the borders of Salisbury Plain, and by October 24th the population close to the Great Western line between Heytesbury and Wylde was increased by 40,000 persons. Young men arriving daily from various parts of the country in their workaday clothes occupied tents and temporary structures until they could be put into uniform, equipped and trained. Some thousands of Canadian troops were also conveyed under the Bristol organisation to Lavington and Patney for another part of the Plain, and some idea of the railway position may be derived from the fact that at one country station the normal staff of three persons had to be increased to thirty-three in the course of a few weeks. The assembly of these troops led to week-end leave being given, and many thousands of men were moved to and from the Plain stations as a result. With the Canadians, country stations had the unique experience of dealing with large amounts of revenue in dollar notes.

In 1915 the military arrangements affecting the railways grew rapidly; a Remount Depot was constructed between Shirehampton and Avonmouth, and in connection with that depot and through the Avonmouth Docks the Great Western Company on their railway dealt with 336,000 horses and mules.

The largest separate movements of troops in 1915 affecting the railways in Bristol were those in February of that year, when 93 trains formed one movement to Avonmouth for embarkation.



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In March 122 trains formed another movement, in April 94 trains a third, and in June 108 trains a fourth. These special trains were treated as a movement unit in each case; they followed each other in quick succession, and were passed on to the Corporation dock premises as they reached Avonmouth. They were worked to carefully prepared schedules, which were rigidly observed. For moving other troops in 1915 trains were formed under the Bristol railway centre direction. For one movement 112 trains and for another 113 trains, these also being worked to exact schedules. There were, of course, a multitude of minor special railway arrangements for troops and equipment.

A Base Supply was established at Avonmouth for sending out food for the men on part of Salisbury Plain and other areas, and by the end of 1915 over 20,000 truck loads were sent from this depot by the Railway Companies. In 1915 large recruiting camps were opened at Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Cheddar and Calne. These were formed chiefly by recruits passing through Bristol, and the men to a large extent were billeted on the inhabitants of those places. Military farm depots were established for mules near Long Ashton, at Keynsham, Axbridge, Highbridge and Bridgwater, the animals being dispatched by rail from Avonmouth Docks and to some extent from Shirehampton Remount Depot.

The construction of aeroplanes by the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company created a new traffic at the Filton railway station, and its accommodation and staff had to be increased. A stone quarry was re-opened at Sandford, from which train-loads of stone were carried to the Salisbury Plain stations, to the new military camps, and the underground storage, after a railway journey, of huge quantities of explosive material was organised at points not far from Bristol. A large munition shell store was commenced at Swindon in November, 1915, and eventually it was so extended that it included the new premises of the Imperial Tobacco Company at that place. Other large munition stores were provided at Dunball, and Stratton, near Swindon. These were all in the Bristol Division, and involved extensive railway traffic.

On September 7th, 1915, a royal train with their Majesties the King and Queen ran to Shirehampton and Bristol.



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Elaborate arrangements were made for this occasion and also for the royal journey from Bristol to Bishop's Lydeard which followed. A second visit of their Majesties took place on November 8th, 1917, and the train remained at Henbury Station during the night of November 8th, and was used as a residence by the royal party. The following morning it proceeded to Bath and Melksham, and at the latter place Mr. H. R. Griffiths and Mr. H. K. Woodward, the local Bristol railway officers who had accompanied the train on the tour, and remained with it at Henbury on the night of November 8th, had the honour of being presented to their Majesties by Viscount Churchill, the Great Western Chairman.

During the war 365 special ambulance trains (excluding those that passed through Bristol for other points) with wounded men for the Bristol hospitals were unloaded at Temple Meads Station, No. 6 platform, in the old part of the station, being used for this purpose. A large staff of ambulance men met each of them with equipment of stretchers, etc., to carry the poor fellows from the trains to the road motors for transit to the various hospitals. Parties of ladies were present at the railway station to serve the sufferers with refreshments. Many of the railway staff competent in ambulance work assisted in dealing with the wounded at the railway station in their own time.

The war extra payment to the staff was first commenced in February, 1915, and afterwards the amount was increased until it reached 33/- per week for each adult in addition to salary or wages.

Reductions in the passenger train services were made from March, 1915, onward; but on May 5th, 1919, the railways commenced to re-establish some of their suspended services. These reductions were chiefly for the purpose of releasing men for the Colours, and to enable engines and stock to be supplied for war purposes at home and abroad. The withdrawal of cheap ticket facilities commenced in February, 1915, but passengers were allowed in many cases a choice of alternative routes which had not previously been available, to compensate for the fewer services.

Early in 1916 it became evident that the possibility of attack by hostile aircraft demanded new arrangements in connection with railway lighting. Thousands of station and yard lamps



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had to be shaded so that they could not be seen from above, signal lamps had to be dealt with similarly, and orders given for the drawing down of carriage blinds after dark. Lights visible from the sea or navigable rivers had to be obscured. Extensive railway arrangements were put in operation for dealing with aircraft raid warnings by telephone, the country being divided up into numbered areas for the purpose and the messages being sent out from the railway headquarters to the Railway Military Office at Bristol and elsewhere for telephonic distribution. Fortunately the railways within the city of Bristol were not affected by enemy aircraft, but the warning regulations were more than once put into operation from the Bristol Divisional Office at points in certain areas.

In the April, 1916, Budget it was proposed to introduce a graduated tax on railway tickets, but this proposal was abandoned.

Some of the new ambulance trains before being sent abroad were placed for public exhibition at Temple Meads Station, and considerable sums of money for charitable objects were obtained from persons who flocked to inspect the interior of the trains.

The railway staff subscribed well to war objects. The scheme which seems to have appealed to them more than any other was the War Seal Foundation, instituted by Sir Oswald Stoll, and nearly £2,000 received from the sale of halfpenny war seals was paid over to this fund.

Women rendered great assistance during the war in taking the place of railwaymen in numerous grades. At the end of 1918, out of a total of 2,225 persons engaged under the Traffic (Operating) Divisional Superintendent, 240 were women, a full proportion of whom were among the employees within the city of Bristol.

The large factory built at Avonmouth and projected explosive works at Hallen involved enormous additional railway traffic, and called for important constructional operations. The single line from Filton to a point near Avonmouth was converted into a double line in 1917, and numerous additional sidings and other works were carried out in anticipation of the Hallen scheme. This was abandoned in May, 1917, on the announcement that the United States were joining this country in the war. At the busiest period about 15,000 workmen were conveyed



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daily to the Avonmouth district from the Bristol stations, and a similar number brought back at night.

Difficulties connected with the coasting trade caused the diversion of large quantities of extra traffic to the railways and resulted in congestion. This was particularly noticed in passing the volume of traffic through the Severn Tunnel and the Bristol area. Passenger fares were increased 50 per cent. from January, 1917, but no increase was made in the goods rates, and this also resulted in crowding the railways by the inclusion of large quantities of goods which formerly used other means of transport now become more expensive than that of the railway.

On May 14th, 1919, an impressive service was held at Bristol Cathedral (simultaneously with one at St. Paul's and at other Cathedrals in the country) in memory of the railwaymen who lost their lives in the war. The address was given by the Lord Bishop. The same form of service was used as at St. Paul's Cathedral, and following it were 140 pages of print containing the names of all the railwaymen in Great Britain and Ireland who lost their lives in the war; the total numbered 18,957 out of 186,475 men from all railways who joined the Colours. From the Great Western staff 25,479 joined the forces, 32 per cent. of the total staff of the Company, and nearly 2,000 lost their lives. Bristol contributed its full proportion.

The terms of the Government Control of Railways according to the announcement to the shareholders provided for the State making up the aggregate net receipts of the railways to the aggregate net receipts for the year 1913, with a proviso that the compensation should be reduced in the same proportion as such receipts for the first half of 1914 were less than those for the first half of 1913; it was subsequently agreed that this proviso should cease to operate from January, 1915, in consideration of the Companies undertaking to relieve the Government of 25 per cent. of the amount of the war bonus granted in February, 1915, to employees who came within the Railway Conciliation scheme. The bonus to other railway employees and subsequent war pay increases were to be borne by the Government as a working expense. In exchange for this guarantee the Government had the use of the railways for free conveyance of all Government traffic, and it has been publicly stated that if



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charged in the ordinary way this would have largely exceeded the amount paid by the State to make up the deficiency, and that therefore the Government and the country had a good bargain by the Control arrangement.

In connection with the Shirehampton Remount Depot over 335,000 horses and mules were dispatched from the docks and from Avonmouth Dock Joint Station to various units and depots throughout the Midlands, the East and South of England. Mules were dispatched ex the docks to depots established at Minehead, Wiveliscombe, Wellington, Taunton, Highbridge, Bridgwater, Axbridge, and Clifton Bridge.

Nearly 35,000 animals for this Remount Depot were received by train and dealt with at Avonmouth Dock Joint Station, these including a few thousands returned from France via Southampton and Tilbury.

Over 14,000 trucks of building materials, fodder, etc., were received at Shirehampton Station in connection with the depot.

A Tractor Depot was established on the Docks Committee's land, and a large number of caterpillar tractors were conveyed by rail.

The establishment of a Base Supply Depot involved the dispatch of some 57,000 trucks of foodstuffs, forage, etc., chiefly to camps on or near Salisbury Plain. Various prisoners of war camps, hospitals, etc., throughout South Wales, the Midlands and the South of England were also supplied from this Base.

Over 130,000 trucks of guns, ammunition, aircraft, tanks, motor and horse vehicles, naval stores, etc., and some locomotives were received for embarkation, and a very large quantity of shells, oleum and materials for munition manufacture were received from overseas, the shells being dispatched to Swindon, Dunball and Newbury.

A more detailed record of the traffic and arrangements affecting Avonmouth will be of interest as showing the value of the Dock Estate there in time of national stress.

The number of special trains on Government account dealt with at Avonmouth ran into thousands.

Over 200,000 troops, British, Colonial and American,



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were duly received and dispatched. French reservists, Serbian recruits and prisoners of war were also dealt with.

Ambulance trains to and from the port conveyed over 46,000 invalids, British and Colonial.

Many thousands of parcels for the Military Forwarding Officer were received.

Auxiliary cruisers used the port to a large extent, and seamen on leave in considerable numbers passed through the Joint Station.

The convoying of ships and diversions to Avonmouth involved the dispatch of valuable consignments of bullion, and thousands of bags of mails had to be dealt with.

During a period of three months about 600 wagons of returned Air Force equipment were dispatched.

The total goods traffic, civil and Government, handled at Avonmouth during the war period, including traffic in connection with Henbury, Chittening and Avonmouth Government factories, exceeded three and a half million tons.

### ROAD TRANSPORT.

The Road Transport Board, a department of the Board of Trade, was inaugurated in Bristol on April 13th, 1918, not only to utilise to the fullest extent the road transport services of the country, but also to conserve motor fuel and horse feeding stuffs. Under D.O.R.A. very full powers were vested in this authority. Captain A. M. Davies, who was at the head of the South-Western Division of England with headquarters in Bristol, was the originator of the whole movement whilst in charge of the Road Transport Department of the Ministry of Food in London. Bristol soon became the centre of great transport activity.

The counties of Gloucester, Somerset, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall were controlled by the Bristol department, branch offices being speedily opened at Gloucester, Taunton, Wells, Exeter, Barnstaple, Dorchester, Plymouth, and Truro, each having a permanent secretary at its head, with a small Committee nominated by the Board of Trade and the Food Ministry.

One of the most important functions of the Road Transport Board was the registering and numbering of all goods-carrying vehicles except those engaged on agricultural work. To enable



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the police readily to see that these were duly registered it became necessary to mark them : P.Bst. followed by a number and in many cases by a sub-number for vehicles driven by petrol, H.Bst. for horse-driven vehicles, S.Bst. for steam and E.Bst. for electrically-propelled vehicles were the distinguishing letters ordered in the Bristol area. Approximately 30,000 vehicles were registered and marked in the South-Western Division. The granting of a permit to use the vehicles was subject to the vehicle being held at the disposal of the Government in the event of a national emergency arising. Soon after the establishment of the Board the dark days of temporary reverses at the Front clouded the horizon. The Divisional Board in conjunction with the Ministry of Food worked assiduously to organise Road Transport Services in order to relieve congestion on the railways and to meet any unexpected development. Thousands of tons of perishable and other food-stuffs were moved through the establishment by the Board of a Transport Control Section. Traders were induced to utilise each other's vehicles for mutual or back loading. The influence of the Board extended to even the remotest villages of the Division, and much labour, fuel, and feeding stuffs were saved by schemes of co-operation and co-ordination. All trade applications for petrol had to be submitted to the Board for recommendation or otherwise to the Petrol Control Department in London ; a broad view was taken of every application, and whilst traders necessarily had their supplies curtailed, schemes of mutual help enabled citizens to bear the hardship with the minimum of inconvenience.

Although the powers of the Board were far-reaching, the good understanding which so happily existed between the Department and Bristolians made it very rarely needful to exercise the wide powers of restraint. When recruiting became a problem of such vital importance to the victorious issue of the war, it was often a matter of the greatest difficulty to keep transport services in movement by reason of the consequent scarcity of labour. The Department were called upon to exercise the functions of arbitrators between traders, and on no occasion was their decision afterwards challenged.

Public meetings were held throughout the division, and the propaganda disseminated among the people has left a lasting



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effect by showing what can be done by willing co-ordination of effort.

Thus the Department progressed until the Armistice, working quietly but none the less effectively. Since that memorable date, November 11th, 1918, the Board has devoted its time to the great work of "Rural Development," reporting to the Government on its own schemes for road transport, rural organisation and the plans of other authorities. The South-Western Division was the first to be called upon by the Government to prepare such a report.

It is a matter of congratulation that with the smallest staff of any Government Department the Road Transport Board has efficiently carried out its duties and justified its existence in the eyes of the country. In the eight days' railway strike of September—October, 1919, the Department rendered excellent service.







## Chapter IX

### Industries and War Supplies







## CHAPTER IX

### INDUSTRIES AND WAR SUPPLIES

THE "BRISTOL" AEROPLANES—SEAPLANES—MOTOR CYCLES—GLYCERINE—COAL TAR PRODUCTS AND HIGH EXPLOSIVES—ENGINEERING—SHELLS—SPELTER MANUFACTURE—SHIPBUILDING AND REPAIRS—LEATHER—BOOTS AND SHOES—CLOTHING—TOBACCO FOR TROOPS—COCOA AND CHOCOLATE—COAL MINING—COAL CONTROL—THE GAS INDUSTRY—ELECTRICITY—MUSTARD GAS—PROTECTION FROM GAS POISONING—PROPOSED EXPLOSIVES FACTORY—WORK OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

BRISTOL has long been noted for the great variety of its industries. While other centres depending upon one or two are subject to periods of serious depression as well as prosperity, in Bristol it is a rare experience for any big number of unskilled persons to be out of employment through depression in trade. If business is slack in one or two directions there is perhaps unusual activity in others. In the first few days of war there was, however, general depression, and the outlook was blacker than we had ever known. Soon orders began to arrive for clothing and boots for army purposes, and these were followed by demands for other supplies, so that unemployment not only ceased, but there arose a great demand for more workers. As the men of fit military age were called to the King's Forces women came forward to take their places in every kind of industry, and as the need for munitions increased every month new workshops were opened, and we find now that there have been permanent additions to the number of our industries, and many women are remaining in employment which they had taken up temporarily.

In this chapter it is shown how well these varied industries were adapted to meet the nation's needs in the great crisis, and it may be inferred that employers and employed put their whole will and energy into the work which they were asked to do.



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

### THE "BRISTOL" AEROPLANES.

To the requisite material of war Bristol made many contributions, but perhaps none more important than the constant stream of aeroplanes which issued from the ancient city. On every battle front the "Bristol" machines made their mark. It is to Bristol and to Bristol men that the Empire owes to-day the fact that in the earlier days of the war we were able to hold more than our own in the air, and it was largely to the credit of Bristol-made aeroplanes that the Empire was enabled in the closing period of hostilities to keep the supremacy of the skies.

In the early days of 1910, when the whole science of practical aeronautics was still in its infancy, and when the enormous future of aerial locomotion was not yet realised by the world at large, the late Sir George White, Bart., and his brother, Mr. Samuel White, established the works of the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company Ltd., at Filton, Bristol. Business men of initiative and foresight though they were known to be, there were few who would have prophesied that before five years had passed the initiative which they displayed would prove to be of vital importance in the preservation of this country at the most critical period of its history. Equally few would have imagined that before nine years had elapsed the modest, though well-equipped, workshops at Filton would have spread themselves over an area of nine acres and that 4,000 workers would find employment in them. That extension was due to the enterprise and enthusiasm of the originators of the company. When flying was still an experimental science they spared neither time nor money to secure its rapid and sound development. The services of the highest theoretical authorities and of the best practical exponents of the new art were immediately enlisted. The production of the best and most reliable machines, and organising methods by which every improvement and discovery could be immediately embodied, speedily bore fruit in the rapid progress which was made. Within twelve months of the formation of the company "Bristol" machines were flying in most parts of the Old World and in countries as wide apart as India, Australia, South Africa, Italy, Russia, Roumania, and Spain—truly a remarkable



## INDUSTRIES AND WAR SUPPLIES

record in the progress of a new industry. The countless experiments continually being conducted on the company's flying ground, and the continual evolution of new designs, each marking a forward step in the direction of increased speed, additional lift, and stability, occasioned a phenomenally rapid development in the science of practical aeronautics.

Some four and a half years after the formation of the new company the outbreak of war brought home to the world the important place which flying had won in the interests of the nation's safety and well-being. The unremitting energy and great foresight shown by the directors of the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company had their reward in the fact that they were immediately able to place at the disposal of the Government two entirely new types of aeroplanes, whilst of available British service pilots no fewer than eighty per cent. had been trained at the "Bristol" schools. Of these new machines the "Bristol" Scout, universally known as the "Bullet," was undoubtedly the best all-round machine of that time, and it was so much in advance of other models that it maintained its lead for about two years. Even at the present day, in spite of the tremendous advances which have been made, the "Bristol Bullet" stands out as a machine of good performance, and upon its lines many more modern aeroplanes have had their inspiration.

From the outbreak of hostilities the aeroplane works at Filton became a hive of activity. Day and night the sounds of industry continued in the shops, and as fast as extra accommodation and plant could be provided the staff were increased. So excellent in design and so sound in construction did the "Bristol" aeroplanes prove, that it was very difficult to cope with the demand of the Flying Services for Bristol-made machines. The excellently-equipped shops of the Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company were adapted for the undertaking of work such as aeroplane construction, and at this juncture their assistance was enlisted. During the greater period of the war a steady output of well-constructed aeroplanes was maintained from the premises of this concern. Sub-contracts involving a deal of careful and well-executed work were also carried out by the Redcliffe Aircraft Works and by Messrs. Jenkins and Sons, of Whitehall, Bristol.



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

The enormous part which the aeroplane was to play in modern war was soon realised. Aerial encounters were of constant occurrence, and soon the supremacy of the air became of vital importance. It was these conditions which heralded the appearance of the "Bristol" Fighter—a two-seater machine, equipped with every appliance for fighting purposes. Its success was immediate. As a two-seater fighting machine it had no equal, and its eminent successes during the last two years of hazardous and exacting war-work in aerial fighting, bombing, and reconnaissance were due no less to the skill and care exercised in its manufacture than to the excellency of the design itself.

Rapidly as the works of the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company Ltd. had extended, no growth could keep pace with the demands made by the Air Force for this type of machine. From the works at Filton fifty machines a week were dispatched, and in addition considerable numbers went from the workshops of the Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company Ltd., but these works could not keep pace with the demand. It was soon realised that local efforts could not hope to cope with production of the number of "Bristol" Fighters required, and contracts were therefore placed with no fewer than seven large industrial concerns, whilst the machines were also being manufactured in America to the order of the United States Government. In stemming the retreat in March, 1918, the "Bristol" aeroplanes played a leading part, and in the final dramatic chapters which preceded the Armistice the work which they performed was of incalculable value. It is probable that during the later stages of the war the "Bristol" Fighters performed more fighting, bombing and reconnaissance work than any other type of aeroplane.

So successful had the smaller "Bristol" aeroplanes proved, that when a heavier type of machine was required for long bombing trips into enemy territory the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company Ltd. were entrusted with the design and construction of such a type. It was then that the giant "Bristol" Triplanes were constructed. These are machines fitted with four engines of 400 horse-power each, capable of flying at 125 miles per hour and of carrying 2,700 lbs. in weight, in addition to petrol, oil and water sufficient for a 500 miles'









FORMATION OF "BRISTOL" FIGHTERS OVER THE ALPS.



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flight. They were primarily ear-marked for the bombing of Berlin, but the signing of the Armistice precluded their being used in that direction. They have since been re-designed and fitted with a luxuriously-appointed Pullman car equipped to carry fourteen passengers in addition to the pilot and engineer.

Mention has been made only of the more widely-adopted types of "Bristol" aeroplanes manufactured at Filton during the war. Other machines, however, were also constructed in considerable numbers, the "Bristol" Monoplanes, for instance. Small and bird-like in appearance, they had a wonderful climb, and were capable of a speed of 130 miles with an engine of only 110 horse-power. Considerable numbers were constructed and proved of great service. A dozen of these were presented by the British to the Chilian Government, and were received with great appreciation there. The work which they have since performed has included the constant crossing of the Andes, never before accomplished, and the attainment of the South American altitude record.

In addition to the actual "Bristol" machines, large numbers of aeroplanes of Government design were manufactured at the Filton Works. These included such models as the B.E.2.C., the B.E.2.D. and the B.E.2.E. The splendid workmanship and attention to detail with which these aeroplanes were constructed became so well known in the Flying Services that the demand amongst pilots was always for a Bristol-built machine.

Two factors have contributed to the great and merited success which the "Bristol" aeroplanes have achieved on every front. One is the excellence of their design and the other the sound and careful workmanship embodied in their construction. The war machines of the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company Ltd. were built from designs embodying all the experience which the Company's designers, under Captain F. S. Barnwell, had obtained from the countless experiments conducted on the firm's flying grounds both in pre-war days and throughout the period of hostilities; and it is on the basis of this experience that the Company were enabled to design the machines in which the pilots of the fighting forces learned to have such faith. That the workmanship



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was faultless was due to the system of constant inspection and supervision in vogue at the Filton Works, to the minute accuracy exacted in craftsmanship, and to the certainty that every scrap of material used was of the highest type. It is noteworthy that, with the sole exception of the engines, every detail for the aeroplanes was manufactured in the Filton factory.

### SEAPLANES AND OTHER AIRCRAFT.

From a date early in 1915 the many thousands of people who daily passed along Park Row, Bristol, the great building known as the Coliseum (originally opened as a roller skating rink) were conscious that it was the scene of ceaseless activity. When the doors were opened glimpses of aircraft could be obtained, and the periodical departure of a smartly-turned-out seaplane gave the key to the nature of the important contribution which was being made by the workers within the Coliseum towards the winning of the war.

At the beginning of 1915 Messrs. Parnall and Sons, Broadmead, which is a part of the manufacturing concern of Messrs. W. & T. Avery Ltd., Birmingham, undertook the construction of seaplanes for the Admiralty, Mr. G. C. Vyle, the managing director of Messrs. Avery, manifesting a great interest in this development. The factories they utilised for the work were premises at Mivart Street, Eastville (where the head offices were established), Baptist Mills, Feeder Road, Redcross Street, and part of Messrs. Parnall's buildings in Broadmead. Experimental works were established at Brislington, and the Coliseum was secured as the general erection shop. Mr. George G. Parnall, who initiated this aircraft business, acted as the general manager, Mr. H. Bolas as designer, Mr. A. P. Hartnell as technical manager, and Mr. A. Murray as works manager.

The operations began with the manufacture of the 150 horse-power Short seaplane, continuing with the 250 horse-power Short Bombers (land machines), and the Hamble Baby, a 130 horse-power Scout seaplane. All these machines were made to the order of the Admiralty for use by the Royal Naval Air Service, and a considerable amount of repair work was also done for the same service.



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When the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps were fused into the Royal Air Force, and orders for the manufacture of aircraft were given out by the Air Board, Messrs. Parnall & Sons were called upon to make Avro biplanes, which had become the recognised "school" machines of the R.A.F. The Avros turned out by Messrs. Parnall were the 504 Type B, the 504 Type C and the 504 Type K. Before the end of the war the last-named type had become the standard training machine both for the Navy and the Army. Messrs. Parnall were the first firm to produce the "conversion" machine Type K in its perfected form, and a large number of representatives of other aircraft manufacturers visited their works in order to inspect the first 504 Type K Avro and note its points. It was certainly a fine model for their guidance, both design and workmanship being excellent ; but this was to be expected of a firm who never turned out a "dud" machine.

Simultaneously with their work on production orders Messrs. Parnall were carrying on experimental work at Brislington. Their design for the Parnall Panther ship aeroplane was accepted by the Air Board, and this fine flyer (of which Messrs. Avery are the patentees) is now the standard ship aeroplane in use by the Royal Navy. The Panther is an extraordinarily fast, handy and serviceable biplane. It is amphibious, for it can "land" on terra firma or on water. Carried on board ship, it takes the air from the deck, but if circumstances prevent it from returning direct to the vessel, it can shed its wheels and light upon the sea, or alternatively use the wheels to make a landing ashore. An arrangement of the planes so that they could be folded back parallel with the fuselage had hitherto been the means by which seaplanes were rendered readily stowable aboard ship. The Parnall Panther, however, departs from this practice, for it is the fuselage, and not the wings, which folds. Messrs. Parnall had received a production order for the Panther just before the Armistice was signed. In all Messrs. Parnall & Sons manufactured about 1,000 aircraft.

The firm carried out a large number of orders for other needs of the Admiralty and War Office, such as bedsteads (11,000), huts and shelters, tables, cupboards, and other appointments, bomb crates (10,000), hand grenade boxes



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(8,000), powder boxes, mine-sinker covers (8,000), and did a great amount of general-fitting up of temporary premises.

### MOTOR CYCLES.

Of the many forms of mechanical locomotion used by the Allies in the Great War the petrol motor is the outstanding success, no matter from what point it is considered, and a great measure of the credit is due to that particular form of petrol vehicle the motor cycle. Bristol has had for many years, if not actually within the city boundary within a few yards of it, the home of that well-known motor cycle the "Douglas." The Douglas Motors Ltd., formerly Douglas Brothers, have been energetically engaged at their factory in Hanham Road for some ten years past developing their wonderfully efficient type of machine, and it is with no small amount of pride that they found their mounts recognised by the War Office as the most suitable light-weight machine for war service.

Soon after the outbreak of war the factory production was quickly concentrated on one particular model, in accordance with War Office specification ; this has come to be known as the "W.D.  $2\frac{3}{4}$  horse-power two-speed model." Machines of this type were turned out in thousands and supplied to all branches of the Army, Navy, and Air Force ; in all over 25,000 of these splendid little motor bicycles were supplied. A considerable number of 4 horse-power side-car outfits were also sent out for service, principally in France, Egypt and Mesopotamia. Engines of "Douglas" design and manufacture were used in hundreds to supply power for small electric generating sets for lighting and for Marconi field wireless outfits. The engine units were adapted to many unorthodox requirements, such as operating the lathes, etc., in a field repair depot, or attached to a trolley car or "jigger" for running on railway lines.

These Bristol-born motor cycles found their way to all parts of the fighting zones. They were in use by all the Allied Armies of Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Roumania, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and America. "Douglas" riders performed remarkable journeys in the wilds of East and West Africa ; they slogged away with heavy loads of kit into the desert regions of Persia, Kurdistan and Caucasia. Hundreds



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of "Douglas" machines were in regular use on the Egyptian, Palestine and Salonika fronts, and as a contrast in working conditions their use in Northern Russia and Murmansk is hard to beat. Their work on the Western Front was of incalculable value.

One instance of remarkable service may be taken as typical of "Douglas" efficiency and reliability. Twenty-eight machines were taken out to West Africa with the No. 1 Squadron, Royal Naval Car Division, under Lieutenant-Commander W. Whittall. After twelve months' gruelling work twenty-six were still in use; ten of these were sent on to East Africa, and the rest were returned home. Of the ten in East Africa eight were still on the road in good running order twelve months later, having seen over two years' regular use under appalling conditions of "road" surfaces and temperature. The Commander says that during this time he had never sent a despatch rider out on a mission which was not duly accomplished within the time expected.

Many war-wrecked machines were returned to the works, some so battered by shell-fire as to be mere unsightly twisted lumps of scrap metal, showing that riders frequently took their machines into positions of the utmost danger. Whilst many a gallant rider has made the supreme sacrifice, many more owe their lives to the wonderful reliability of their mounts.

### GLYCERINE FOR PROPELLENTS.

Behind every explosive projectile used in warfare, whether for guns or rifles, there must be a propellant which by its explosion drives the projectile on its mission. The chief propellant used in the British Army during the war was cordite, which is a mixture of nitro-glycerine and nitro-cellulose. Nitro-glycerine is the most powerful explosive in practical use. Glycerine, which is its root material, is a constituent, as is well known, of all oils and fats, the average contents being about ten per cent. Every cordite cartridge requires its own weight of fat for the glycerine alone. After the first year of war, if not before, the blockade practically reduced the enemy to their home-produced oils and fats, and therefore deprived them of the main source of glycerine for propellents.



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The manufacture of glycerine from oils and fats is a complicated and lengthy process. It is usually associated with soap manufacture, the process being so arranged that at one stage the glycerine lyes are completely separated from the fatty material, which then proceeds along a separate course of manufacture to emerge as soap. The glycerine lyes are treated by chemical processes and concentrated, and in this way crude glycerine is produced. The soap manufacturer usually takes leave of the glycerine at this stage, but before it can be used for explosive purposes it needs to go through an elaborate process of distillation and concentration so as to produce a glycerine of rigid quality, for the presence of even minute proportions of certain impurities would make it liable to explode during the process of nitration.

Bristol can claim to have played no mean part in the production of glycerine for war requirements. From 1915 onwards the whole of the crude glycerine produced at the Broad Plain Soap Works of Christopher Thomas & Brothers Ltd. was requisitioned for Government requirements. The whole of this crude glycerine, as well as a large quantity of crude glycerine produced by other soap makers, was also distilled to produce "dynamite" glycerine at Broad Plain, the plant being engaged practically continuously day and night throughout the war. The ordinary use of glycerine, as for example the chemically pure grade, which in normal times is the chief output at Broad Plain, was stopped entirely or reduced to a bare minimum, so that the whole of the output was devoted to Government requirements, mainly of "dynamite" glycerine for propellents, but including also glycerine for use in machine-guns and motor-cars to prevent the freezing of water jackets and for other purposes. Christopher Thomas & Brothers Ltd. also supplied large quantities of a special glycerine product of their own invention which is used on all the big ships of the Navy.

During the war the demand for propellents increased at an extraordinary rate *pari passu* with the demand for high explosives. It is to the credit of the British soap manufacturers that they supplied the full total of the demands made upon them for glycerine. At Broad Plain, for instance, the output of glycerine was greatly increased. This was done not only by using increased quantities of oils and fats, but also by scientific



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improvements in the process of glycerine recovery. During 1917-1918 in particular, when the supply of oils and fats from overseas was seriously reduced through the submarine attacks, the question of improved yield became of paramount importance. Christopher Thomas & Brothers Ltd. were informed by the Ministry during 1918 that they had effected a greater increase in yield of glycerine due to the application of scientific methods than any other soap firm. They also produced glycerine from sources previously neglected, new plant of their own devising being installed for the purpose.

Any credit that may attach to this record belongs entirely to the faithful workers, who at no time spared themselves in their efforts to bring about the desired results, but responded in the most whole-hearted way to every call that was made upon them. This result was all the more remarkable because so many parts of the manufacturing process seem at first sight remote from the ultimate object—glycerine. During the war the firm's main product was glycerine, and soap became a bye-product in its manufacture. Matters have now reverted to the former state of affairs, where glycerine is once more a bye-product, but all who were associated with the extensive production of glycerine for war requirements, 1914-1918, are proud to have contributed their little share towards the final victory.

### COAL TAR PRODUCTS AND HIGH EXPLOSIVES.

Nearly all high explosives are manufactured by the chemical action of a mixture of the mineral acids, sulphuric acid and nitric acid, on various substances. The production and refining of these various substances in Bristol preparatory to this action is the subject of this short survey.

These substances are chiefly benzene, toluene, xylol, carbolic acid or phenol, and naphthaline. From these all the most important high explosives of the present day are manufactured. Benzene is converted into either the several nitro-benzenes or synthetic phenol or carbolic acid; this again is manufactured into the well-known picric acid, or lyddite. Toluene easily forms with proper treatment trinitrotoluene, better known as T.N.T. Xylene and naphthaline are used for making the nitro-xylenes and naphthalines, both of which are powerful



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explosives. Of the five substances mentioned the first three are by far the most important, as they are the explosives used most extensively by British arms, while the latter substances were used more by the Allies.

The whole of these important bodies occur in coal tar, coal gas, and certain kinds of petroleum. The coal tar and gas are made by the carbonisation of coal, that is, by means of the ordinary gas works practices, while the oil wells in Borneo, the possession of the Asiatic Petroleum Company Ltd., produce an oil rich in toluene and benzene.

The firms in Bristol who were the means of producing these materials during the war were : The Bristol Gas Company, The Asiatic Petroleum Company, Portishead, and Messrs. William Butler & Company (Bristol) Ltd., the latter being the refiners from the tar and crude benzole produced in the home counties of Bristol, viz. most of Gloucestershire, Somerset, and Wiltshire.

It is lamentable to report that prior to the war there were few plants in the country capable of producing in the necessary pure state these vitally important high explosive materials. In the autumn of 1914 the Explosives Committee, under the admirable direction of Lord Moulton, instructed all tar distillers to proceed with the erection of such plant, and Messrs. William Butler & Company (Bristol) Ltd. were one of the first in the country to produce early in 1915 on a large scale benzene and toluene in a pure form. During the war this firm distilled some 22,000,000 gallons of tar, which is equivalent approximately to 2,400,000 tons of coal carbonised. They also produced and refined some 415,000 gallons of benzene, 195,000 gallons of toluene, and 253,000 gallons of carbolic acid. The refining plant had to be enlarged frequently, until it reached a maximum output of 30,000 gallons in one month. It is interesting to summarise these statistics into terms of T.N.T. from Bristol's output of toluene and lyddite from Bristol's output of benzene and carbolic acid, when the surprising figures of approximately 37,593 tons of T.N.T. and 3,861 tons of lyddite were obtained.

The work of the "Shell" Company (The Asiatic Petroleum Company) was so notable that it deserves detailed reference. The outstanding fact is that during the critical year 1915 the



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company's distillery at Portishead Dock produced approximately eighty per cent. of Britain's whole output of toluol, the basic ingredient of the high explosive T.N.T., so extensively used for shells, bombs and mines. When the war commenced, and for several months afterwards, the Government of Great Britain relied upon coal as the source of the materials for its high explosives. Steps were taken to increase the output derivable from coal tar residuals at the various gas works in the kingdom, but the total was utterly inadequate to meet the needs of the Naval and Military authorities. It was known that crude petroleum offered an alternative source, and the "Shell" Company offered to supply the Government with large quantities of toluol extracted from the particular form of mineral oil found in Borneo. The offer was at once accepted, but no distillery for separating the toluol existed in this country. At Rotterdam the "Shell" Company had such an installation, and they took the bold course of shipping the whole concern, "lock, stock, and barrel," to Portishead. This work was carried out with the utmost speed, the Government co-operating with the company; the site at Portishead was meanwhile prepared, and in six weeks the new factory within the port of Bristol was in full operation. The plant turned out 1,100 tons of toluol benzine per month, sufficient for about 1,300 tons of T.N.T., in addition to vast quantities of xylol used by the French Government in the manufacture of high explosives. The conversion of basic product into T.N.T. took place elsewhere. To avoid the risk of putting all the eggs in one basket, the company established a second distillery at Barrow-in-Furness. During the war 18,500 tons of toluol were produced at Portishead and at the northern centre 11,600 tons. The total yielded about 60,000 tons of T.N.T., a quantity sufficient for nearly a quarter of a million tons of high explosives for mines, bombs and shells. The story of the "Shell" Company's war work was afterwards told in graphic style by Mr. P. G. A. Smith in a little book punningly called *The "Shell" that hit Germany hardest*.

### ENGINEERING.

The Bristol employees of John Lysaght Limited responded most readily to the call for recruits, and the majority of those who were eligible and could be spared had enlisted prior to



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the passing of the Military Service Act. The firm paid an allowance to all their men whilst on service, and kept open their posts for them on their return. The total number of the firm's employees at all their works who served in the Army and Navy was 2,648. Of this number 879 went from the Bristol works, 107 being killed and a large number wounded. Whilst the export galvanizing department had to be closed down owing to the prohibition of exports of galvanized sheets, the firm were able to carry out a very large amount of valuable war work in its other departments in Bristol. Contracts were executed for the British War Office, Admiralty, Air Board, and Ministry of Munitions, and for the Dominion and Allied Governments, and the following list will give some idea of the extent and varied character of the work done :—

Construction and erection of numerous steel aeroplane and seaplane sheds, motor transport sheds, and factories, including the main platers' shed at Beachley Auxiliary Shipyard.

Some thousands of mine sinker cases, used in connection with naval mine fields.

Many thousands of "Nissen" huts and shelters, and their component parts for use at the front.

About 4,000,000 yards of wire netting for use by the British and Allied Armies.

About 20,000 tons of galvanized corrugated black and painted steel sheets.

Ridging, troughs, mangers, cisterns, tanks, cylinders, corn bins, buckets, tubs, dust bins, powder cans, etc., in large quantities.

Whilst this record deals only with Bristol, it is interesting to note that at other works of the company were produced large quantities of the steel used in the manufacture of "Tanks" for the Army, steel trench plates, brass cartridge strip, etc.

### THE MAKING OF SHELL CASES.

In the spring of 1915 it occurred to Mr. W. Trimmer, Managing Director of the Uskside Engineering Works, Newport, Mon., that some of the West of England engineering firms might assist in the manufacture of shell cases, for which at the time



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there was urgent need. He approached the heads of a number of leading firms, and the proposal was approved at a meeting of the local branch of the Engineering Employers' Federation, who appointed a small committee to negotiate with the War Office. The members of the committee were: Mr. Trimmer, Mr. (now Sir) Percy K. Stothert, K.B.E. (Messrs. Stothert & Pitt Ltd., Bath), and Mr. J. P. Brazil (Messrs. Brazil, Straker & Company Ltd., Bristol). They had an interview at the War Office, and arranged to deliver 100,000 18-pounder H.E. shells at the rate of 5,000 per week. Shortly afterwards the Ministry of Munitions was created, and when in June, 1915, Mr. Lloyd George, the first Minister of Munitions, visited Bristol, the engineering trade, masters and men, cordially promised to give the utmost support possible in the production of munitions of war. They kept their word. A general committee were at once appointed to organise the output, all the firms in Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wilts, Devon, Berks, Hants, and Dorset being represented. From this body a Board of Management were chosen, composed of five manufacturers, viz.: Sir Percy K. Stothert, who acted as Chairman, Mr. H. G. Hill (John Lysaght Ltd., Bristol), Mr. W. Trimmer, Mr. J. P. Brazil, and Mr. C. A. Lister (R. A. Lister & Company Ltd., Dursley). This Board were approved by the Army Council and granted a formal charter. The area was then made to include Herefordshire, Cornwall, because of the distance from Bristol, being constituted an area by itself.

Offices were opened at West India House, Bristol. Sub-committees were promptly formed in various centres of the area, and besides engineering, lace, biscuit, chocolate, tobacco, paper-bag, gas, and other works with repairing shops were pressed into service. Within a surprisingly short space of time over sixty firms were making shell cases.

A large collecting and finishing factory was set up in Victoria Road, St. Philip's Marsh, Bristol, in the premises of Messrs. John Priest & Company. This factory proved a great success in every way. The Board of Management had the good fortune to find a number of public-spirited men with ample qualifications who gladly undertook the direction or supervision of special branches of the work, and continued to serve as long as the need existed, in some cases long after the



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cessation of hostilities. To all of them much credit is due. The Young Men's Christian Association ran a canteen through a committee of Bristol ladies. A lady acted as the head, while another gave valuable service in buying food and catering. There was also a Welfare Supervisor, who did much to promote the happiness of the workers, of whom eighty-two per cent. were women. Entertainments and War Savings talks were given from time to time, and outdoor games were provided. The Board of Management consider that a great debt of gratitude is due to these ladies, who attended in all weathers.

So prompt were the West of England manufacturers that they were in advance of the Ministry's supply of materials, and some discouragement and difficulty arose for the Management Board to deal with. But so great was the common desire to help the country, that even the most irritating conditions were not allowed to diminish the fine spirit of masters or workers.

A special feature of the area was the organisation set up for the transfer of the steel-cast numbers and ingot numbers to the shell cases during manufacture. This was arranged by getting together a band of voluntary inspectors in each district, who attended the various works when required and transferred the marks during machining. These gentlemen came from all classes of society, and included retired naval and military officers, ministers of religion, and professional men over military age, all glad to render service to the State. The work was arduous and monotonous, and often by night as well as by day. It was very efficiently carried out, and resulted in a considerable saving of money to the country.

During the period the Bristol factory was in operation the output of finished, inspected and accepted 18-pounder H.E. shells was 3,044,337. In addition 169,673 18-pounder shrapnel shells were rectified, having the cast-iron sockets removed and brass substituted. The output per week varied considerably, owing to the constant changes of programme of War Office requirements, falling to 15,000 per week in 1917, and reaching 45,000 per week in 1918.

On November 8th, 1917, the factory was highly honoured by receiving a visit from their Majesties King George V. and Queen Mary, who were received by the Board of Management



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and conducted round the factory. Their Majesties visited factories at Bath and Melksham on the following day.

In the whole area many hundreds of thousands of other sorts of shells and munitions were turned out, some of the articles running into millions. Having regard to the fact that the area is mainly an agricultural one, the Board of Management, the contractors, and the workers, paid and voluntary, are to be congratulated on the splendid results achieved.

### SPELTER.

Spelter is the name given to the commercial form of metallic zinc. The industry of spelter manufacture was first established in Bristol about the year 1740, but as knowledge of the metal increased the processes then in use became obsolete, and the production of spelter ceased to be a local industry towards the end of the eighteenth century. In 1835 works were erected in Swansea, and that has hitherto remained the greatest zinc producing centre in the United Kingdom.

The zinc smelting industry received a tremendous impetus towards the close of the nineteenth century by the discovery of a suitable process for the extraction of the metal from a difficult type of mixed ore containing lead, silver, and zinc, produced in very large quantities by the Broken Hill Mines of Australia. Prior to the use of this process the mines had been operated for the lead and silver contents of the ore, and the zinc was left in the residues, great dumps of which—some of them containing over one million tons of powdered material—were to be found on each of the Broken Hill properties. About 1,700,000 tons of crude ore were produced annually by the Broken Hill Companies, who employed on an average about 9,000 men. As soon as it was seen that the process for the treatment of Broken Hill residues was successful, and that large tonnages of smelting material would consequently be available for the market, the German metal buyers cleverly obtained control of the new source of supply by offering to purchase the entire output over a long term of years. In consequence of this enterprise the Australian raw material, containing in a preliminary form the whole of the spelter requirements of this country, could only reach the United Kingdom as metal



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by the good offices of the German zinc smelters. Further than this the preliminary roasting of the ore provided the German smelters at a low cost with a bye-product consisting of very large quantities of sulphuric acid, which was of great value in enabling them to build up the subsidiary industries of chemical manufacture and superphosphate production in competition with the United Kingdom.

During the year 1913 the total consumption of spelter in Great Britain was approximately 200,000 tons, of which only 60,000 tons (almost entirely from oxidised ores, from calamine imported from foreign countries or from the re-treatment of "hard" spelter) were produced in this country, the balance being imported mainly from Germany and Belgium. Consequently, on the outbreak of war not only was the control of the spelter market in German hands, but the sale of zinc concentrates produced by the Broken Hill Companies was utterly disorganised, as for reasons already explained there were practically no facilities in this country for the treatment of the material. The necessary supplies of spelter for munitions of war had, therefore, to be obtained from the United States of America.

The Australian Government promptly took steps to deal with the control, treatment and marketing of their mineral resources, and the contracts with the German ore buyers were declared null and void. The then Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, the Right Hon. W. M. Hughes, visited this country with the object, among others, of selling a considerable portion of raw material to any British smelting works that might be erected for the purpose of treating it. The obvious step in the national interest was to build works sufficient to produce in times of peace the normal consumption of spelter in the United Kingdom. Accordingly experts were employed to examine and report upon a number of works sites in the vicinity of various British ports, and eventually it was decided that the site in regard to which the essential factors were most favourably combined was that at Avonmouth, in close proximity to the Docks, and in particular affording transport facilities which compare favourably with any other spot in the world. A site was acquired covering an area of about 400 acres, situate on land adjoining the St. Andrew's Road Station of the Great



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Western Railway, and only half a mile distant from the rivers Avon and Severn, and the National Smelting Company Ltd. were formed with the object of erecting thereon a zinc smelting works having an ultimate capacity of about 70,000 tons of spelter per annum.

The Ministry of Munitions decided to acquire a portion of the site in order to erect a large plant for the production of sulphuric acid for munitions purposes, and an agreement was entered into with the National Smelting Company Ltd. by which that Company were to take over this plant after the war for the purpose of roasting zinc concentrates and producing their own supplies of sulphuric acid therefrom. It is estimated that eventually upwards of 100,000 tons of concentrated sulphuric acid will be produced each year.

The Spelter Works will consist of three main sections, viz. roasters, distillation plant, and potteries. The roasters are twenty in number, and will each have eighteen compartments connected by flues which will carry the sulphurous gas to acid towers for conversion into sulphuric acid. A building of steel frame construction with concrete floors, the walls being supported by reinforced concrete piles, is being erected near the roasters capable of holding 20,000 tons of blende. This building will be known as the green ore store, and is furnished with transporter, lifting and conveyor plants and grabs for handling the material and serving the roasters. A similar building with a capacity of 10,000 tons has been erected for the purpose of storing calamine. The distillation plant consists of six blocks, each block containing four furnaces. Each furnace contains 384 retorts, which means a total of 9,216 retorts for the complete range of furnaces. Each smelter block consists of a steel frame building on a concrete raft foundation, and to each there are two brick chimneys, each 217 feet high, resting on reinforced concrete piles. The gas producer plant consists of twelve batteries of five producers each, two batteries being erected between each pair of smelting blocks. Coal will be fed into the producers by a conveyor plant having the necessary lifting and discharging appliances. The potteries comprise clay store, pot-making house, press rooms, and pot-drying house, and is equipped with crushing and grinding machinery, together with mixing and pugging plant. The pot-drying house,



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which is the largest in the world, has storage room for about 50,000 retorts, and is built of stone and brick with double floors of timber and concrete, steam heating pipes being placed between the double floors for drying the clay pots.

Steel and concrete bridges have been constructed connecting the various buildings, which are linked up by standard and narrow gauge railways. The stone required in connection with the building operations has been obtained from a quarry situate at Penpole Hill, about a mile and a half from the factory site, where also an excellent clay for brick-making was discovered. A brickworks was erected near the quarry, which, except during the first few months of construction, supplied all the bricks required in the erection of the buildings and works. In addition to meeting the needs of the National Spelter Factory, over 3,000 tons of stone and 1,500,000 bricks were supplied for the Shirehampton Housing Scheme of the Local Government Board, and considerable quantities were also sent to His Majesty's Factory at Avonmouth, the Air Board at Yate, etc.

As an indication of the size and importance of the spelter undertaking, it may be mentioned that the buildings will contain a floor area of over 1,000,000 superficial feet ; over three miles of drains have been constructed, and three miles of standard gauge and five miles of two feet gauge railways have been laid down. Twenty-six million bricks have been utilised in the construction of the works, together with 110,000 cubic yards of concrete, 30,000 superficial feet of reinforced concrete segments, 5,000 tons of structural steel, nearly 100,000 lineal feet of reinforced concrete piling, 15,000 cubic yards of dry filling, 70,000 tons of fire-bricks, 8,000 tons of fire-clay and 125,000 cubic feet of timber. Over 60,000 yards of excavation have been necessary in connection with brick-making.

It is proposed to utilise a considerable portion of the sulphuric acid produced in the manufacture of superphosphates, an essential fertiliser. The stimulus which the war has given to agriculture in the United Kingdom necessitates the supply of very large quantities of this fertiliser, and there is at present in course of preparation an elaborate scheme of distribution of this material direct to the farmers, thereby eliminating intermediate profits between the producer and the consumer. At this point, therefore, the new industry of zinc smelting



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links up with the re-awakened agricultural industry for mutual benefit. A further portion of the acid will be used in connection with a mineral oil refinery, which is to be established in close proximity to the smelter site.

The site at Avonmouth offers every inducement for the establishment of metal refineries of different kinds. It is intended to erect plants for the manufacture of zinc sheets from the spelter produced on the spot, and of zinc oxide from the residues from the distillation furnaces. Prior to the war almost the whole of the national requirements of these commodities were imported from the Continent, and the latest development, therefore, represents the establishment of two additional industries practically new to this country.

It was realised from the beginning that a new industry set up during war time, and having to withstand world-wide competition in times of peace, could only maintain itself provided the greatest possible efficiency was secured in every department of the business. With that object in view, experts in each branch have been employed in a consultative capacity, and all possible labour-saving devices, particularly where the conditions are arduous, are being introduced. At the same time, it is essential that the labour employed shall not only be satisfied with the conditions, but interested in the success of the undertaking, and this aspect is being carefully thought out. With a view to meeting the housing difficulty in the most attractive manner possible, a Public Utility Society has been formed for the purpose of providing housing accommodation on Garden City lines. The number of houses will be limited to approximately twelve per acre, so that each tenant will have his own small allotment adjoining his cottage. The Public Utility Society was formed in order to avoid the necessity for the works proprietors also becoming landlords in relation to their employees. Arrangements have been made with the University Women's Settlement in Bristol to open up a branch of their work at Avonmouth. It will, therefore, be evident that at this important West of England centre the problems of labour unrest are receiving expert, and at the same time sympathetic, consideration.



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### SHIPBUILDING AND REPAIRS.

Shipbuilding was certainly not a thriving industry in Bristol when the war came suddenly upon us. Messrs. Charles Hill & Sons had a small coasting steamer under construction, but otherwise there was not more work than would find continual employment for the men engaged on repairs. Then in 1916, when we were confronted with the submarine menace, came the great cry for "Ships and more ships." Messrs. Hill & Sons immediately answered that call, and came to the country's assistance with both practical and financial assistance. Their Albion Dockyard was quickly transformed. Three additional building berths were opened up, the latest machinery and plant for shipbuilding and marine engineering were installed, and in a short space of time a leading shipping journal described it as "a model yard, which will bear favourable comparison with any shipbuilding yard now in existence." The firm's enterprise, from a national point of view, has been amply justified, as will be seen from the following record of their output since the necessity arose. They have launched two coasting steamers of a deadweight carrying capacity of 4,000 tons; two Atlantic liners of a deadweight capacity of 9,000 tons, and eight standard steamers of a deadweight capacity of 34,000 tons. The repair department has also done yeoman service. Four paddle-steamers were fitted as mine-sweepers, another as a tender to the Fleet, four rescue tugs, one sloop, one patrol boat, four oil-carrying vessels, and twenty-five tugs were overhauled and repaired, one vessel was fitted out as a depot ship, 400 merchant vessels—some with torpedo damage—were again made good for service, and in addition this department assisted in the fitting out of four auxiliary cruisers.

Another excellent record is that of Messrs. J. Jefferies & Sons Ltd. As soon as war broke out they converted three passenger steamers into armed merchant cruisers, by removing all passenger accommodation, fruit bins, etc., the three steamers being ready for the more serious game of war in the short space of six weeks. A number of transports for troops were also fitted out, on several accommodation for 1,500 men being prepared in six days. Other steamers were adapted for the



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transport of mules and horses, while repairs and alterations were carried out to no fewer than 620 steamers. These vessels included armed merchant cruisers, torpedo destroyers, patrol boats, sloops, transports, hospital ships, motor boats, mine-sweepers, decoy and mystery ships, the total tonnage dealt with being close on 2,750,000 tons. At the conclusion of the war a number of vessels were fitted out for the transport of troops back to their homes in the colonies.

To Messrs. John Shearman & Company Ltd. fell the largest shipping contract entrusted to the Bristol Channel yards by the Admiralty. This was the re-classing of one of our county cruisers. The work of overhauling involved the lifting of thirty-one boilers for repair, removal of the broadside guns from the lower 'tween decks to the upper bridge deck, the fitting of armour plate and casements, in addition to making good the ship and her machinery generally. This work gave employment to no fewer than 1,000 men. Our first monitors, of ninety foot beam, were accommodated by Messrs. Shearman & Company following their trial run from the North, their beam being too great for any other dry dock in the Bristol Channel. The firm's war record also included the fitting out of armed dispatch vessels, merchant vessels as armed cruisers, merchant ships as troop and prison vessels, the installation of oil ballast, smoke producers, and wireless apparatus. Hospital ships were also refitted, vessels with torpedo damage—in many cases severe—were dry-docked and repaired, trawlers were converted for the British and Russian Governments into mine-sweepers, heavy derrick gear was placed in position for lifting weights at Salonica and in the East, cargo vessels were supplied with mine defence and magazines, and gunboats and destroyers were repaired and overhauled.

Messrs. G. K. Stothert & Company Ltd., one of the oldest firms in Bristol, carried out many important contracts, and repaired, overhauled and fitted out numerous ships for purposes of war. Messrs. P. & A. Campbell's ten paddle mine-sweepers were equipped by this firm, while another paddle-boat was fitted out as a hospital tender. In addition, ten hospital ships were got ready, an auxiliary cruiser was fitted out, and assistance rendered with four others, while no fewer than 190 steamers were re-fitted for carrying troops, ammunition, horses, mules, etc.



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The firm also overhauled and repaired four "Q" boats, or mystery ships, and two destroyers. Other important contracts included the repairing and fitting out of seven trawlers, six tugs, two drifters, and two yachts as tenders, as well as dry-docking and making good numerous merchant vessels and dazzle-painting their hulls and fittings.

A word of praise should be given to the thousands of men who were engaged on this important work. During the whole period of the war there was not a single strike of employees. When any difficulty arose the matter was submitted to a conference of masters and men, and in every instance an amicable arrangement was quickly reached. Although something like 200 conferences were held, there was never a deadlock.

### BRISTOL LEATHER.

Bristol has always been famed for the quality of its sole leather, a good portion of which was used in making army boots during the war. Practically the whole of the Bristol sole leather was used for this purpose, and in consequence of the great demand for the best quality leather, the Bristol tanners increased their output by about thirty per cent. The British army boot was the best-manufactured in the world, and besides being made for our own men, Britain had to supply boots to most of the Allies. In consequence of this it is believed that the demand for British sole leather will continue for export to the countries who have had the benefit of using these boots. All the tanneries in Bristol are of very old standing, and have been in existence for well over a hundred years, in many cases under the management of the same families. Hides are drawn from all parts of the world to this centre, but more especially from South America. Unfortunately, London and Liverpool are the chief ports where these hides come in, and thus a good deal of expense is incurred bringing them to Bristol, but it is hoped that eventually it may be able to get direct import. Tanning materials are also drawn from all parts of the world, but very largely from our own Empire. It is curious that Bristol has not hitherto been a great centre for upper leather manufacture, for which to-day there is an enormous demand, but one firm of tanners is now developing this branch



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of the trade, and has lately bought premises of considerable extent with a view to putting down a plant that will deal with a very large output. It is hoped that the large increase in the leather production that has taken place in the last five years may be maintained and even increased. Bristol tanners are determined to maintain the excellent quality which gave a reputation to the leather in the past, and to-day, at the high prices ruling, it is more than ever essential that quality should be maintained. Owing to the absolute necessity of maintaining the supply of leather for the Army, the Government treated tanning as a protected trade, and called up only a limited number of men from each works, but a fair proportion of tannery employees served their country in the Forces. From the seven tanneries in Bristol seven of the principals joined up at the start of the war. This is a record of which the trade is proud, although the loss of one of the younger members is mourned.

### BOOTS AND SHOES.

Before the war there were certainly not more than one or two firms in the Bristol district making army boots, and even in those cases the quantities were small. Orders of considerable magnitude began to arrive in August, 1914, not from the British Government but from the French; though there were soon inquiries from our own Government, and before long orders were placed, and by degrees practically every firm was called upon for a maximum output. It was quickly realised that existing machinery and plant were unequal to the demands, and to keep pace with pressing orders, not only were many new machines required, but in several instances re-organisation of the whole factory was necessary, and the instruction of many new hands. All labour difficulties were overcome, thanks to mutual good will. The men were patriotic, and met the emergency with the right spirit. As the Army drew heavily upon the best men for service in the fighting line or work in the army boot shops, their places in the factories were filled by a large number of women, who had to be taught the various operations they were required to perform; and it has to be recorded that these women not only proved very apt at learning,



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but as the men were demobilised they made way for them to resume work. The Government saw to it that the extra machinery and the raw materials required were supplied. A National Committee of Production, consisting of five members, were formed, of which Mr. Percy Steadman, President of the local branch of the Incorporated Federated Associations of Boot and Shoe Manufacturers, was a member, representing the West of England. All questions of wages were satisfactorily settled, there being almost weekly meetings of the Arbitration Board until 1918, when national prices for labour on army boots were fixed.

Not only did the district manufacture boots for the British and French armies, but it supplied nearly all the Allies—Serbia, Italy, Russia and America—with large quantities. The whole British boot trade made 52,000,000 pairs, and Bristol's contribution was between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 pairs. The boots were, of course, made to suit the conditions of the countries to which they were sent. Some were adapted to mountain-climbing, with "counters" at the heels to enable the soldiers to force a foothold in the snow by striking backwards. The Serbian boot was of this kind, and higher in the leg than the British. The Russian high-leg cavalry boot was of very large size. In addition to all sorts of boots for the armies in the field and sandals for the Bedouins, there was an enormous output of canvas shoes for men in the military hospitals.

All the time the needs of the War Office were being met those of the civilian population received due attention. When prices were soaring and threatened to get beyond the means of the average person, a War-time Boot Scheme was established which gave a boot to a standard specification at a minimum profit to maker and retailer. That scheme was brought into operation in January, 1918, and during the fifteen months that it remained in force nearly 2,000,000 pairs of boots and shoes were produced locally out of a total for the whole country of 23,000,000 pairs distributed in about the following proportions :

Girls' Boots and Shoes	..	..	3,150,000	pairs.
Boys' Boots and Shoes	..	..	4,585,000	„
Women's Boots and Shoes	..	..	8,285,000	„
Men's Boots and Shoes	..	..	6,755,000	„



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It will be seen that the boot and shoe industry had its full share in maintaining the good name of the trade and of the city and district during a time of severe testing.

### CLOTHING.

As one of the principal centres of the clothing trade, Bristol was soon called upon to play its part in providing clothing for the Army and Navy. Although the output from the district was exceeded by such centres as London and Leeds, Bristol has always maintained a reputation for the character of its productions, and as soon as it became apparent that the whole nation must strain every nerve to win the war the city rose to the occasion and did its part. The Royal Army Clothing Department had a gigantic task in providing for the millions of men taken from civilian life, and at one period, when the air raids threatened seriously to curtail the output of the London area, two representatives of the Army Contracts Department, the Hon. Arthur Davey (whose death by drowning whilst crossing from Ireland in the s.s. *Leinster* was much deplored) and Mr. G. H. Kingston, O.B.E., called the manufacturers of the West of England together and, frankly explaining the needs of the Department, invited their co-operation and the formation of an Advisory Committee. This was at once constituted with Mr. G. E. Broderick as Chairman, and within a short period fully seventy per cent. of the output of each manufacturer was cheerfully given. The Surveyor-General of Supply having appointed a Committee of Manufacturers to review patterns and specifications of army clothing, extended an invitation to Mr. Broderick to become a member, which he accepted. The Committee held thirty meetings, and many recommendations were made; these resulted in a very great saving, the Army Council approving of a large proportion of the suggestions. Bristol was closely associated with the production and distribution of Standard Clothing, the arrangements in connection with which entailed a great amount of time, labour and money, and necessitated many visits to Bradford and London.



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### TOBACCO FOR TROOPS.

When the Great War burst upon the world the employees of the Imperial Tobacco Company fit for Active Service were eager to answer the call, and though the Company had great difficulty in running the business without their assistance, the directors gave them every facility to go. Every man who went, right up to the time the Armistice was signed, was promised that he would be taken back, and that he would not suffer financially. The number of men who joined His Majesty's Forces was about 5,000, a very large proportion of whom were from Bristol. It is a matter of deep regret that 530 of these laid down their lives, or were reported as "missing." The Company are extremely proud of the fact that fifteen of their men received the Military Cross, six the Distinguished Conduct Medal, five the Meritorious Service Medal, thirty-two the Military Medal (two with a Bar), nine have been mentioned in Despatches, and several have received decorations from Allied Governments. During the war the Company received thousands of descriptive letters from their men in all parts of the world, from such widely-separated places as Archangel, Peshawar, Baku, Jerusalem, Salonica, Mombasa, Bagdad, New York, Northern France and Belgium, and the Grand Fleet; these would form many interesting and instructive volumes. The Company's products played a prominent part in the lives of our gallant soldiers and sailors. Millions of cigarettes and many thousands of pounds of tobacco and hundreds of thousands of cigars manufactured in the Company's factories in Bristol and other parts of the country were supplied to the War Office, Naval and Military Hospitals, Officers and Men in the Army and Navy, Prisoners of War, The Navy and Army Canteen Board, the Young Men's Christian Association, Colonial Red Cross Societies, and other organisations in connection with the war. It is of interest to note that Messrs. W. D. & H. O. Wills also made shells in their principal Bristol factory when the need was urgent. Very substantial contributions in money and in goods were sent by the Company and the employees from time to time to the various war funds, the employees at Bristol being most eager and generous in their subscriptions.



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The large factory at Ashton Gate, which was acquired by the Imperial Tobacco Company from the British-American Tobacco Company in March, 1919, took a prominent part in Bristol's war activities, practically the whole of the huge output of tobacco and cigarettes from that factory being dispatched direct to all parts of the world for the consumption of our soldiers and sailors. From these works 1,225 men joined His Majesty's Forces, and the Company take great pride in the fact that nine of these men were awarded the Military Cross, two the Distinguished Conduct Medal, three the Meritorious Service Medal, sixteen the Military Medal; seven were mentioned in Despatches, and two have received decorations from Allied Governments. The Company deeply regret that 129 of the men who joined His Majesty's Forces will never return.

Credit is due not only to those who served with the Forces, but to those who carried on the work in their absence, and the directors of the Imperial Tobacco Company record their appreciation of these services rendered in an anxious, never-to-be-forgotten period.

### COCOA AND CHOCOLATE.

With regard to the effect of the war upon the cocoa and chocolate industry of J. S. Fry & Sons Ltd. several items of interest may be noted. In addition to members of the firm, 1,050 men joined the Colours, of which number unfortunately 127 were called upon to sacrifice their lives. A good number of men won distinctions, of which the firm are justly proud. Included is one member of the staff who attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, with the distinctions of D.S.O. and M.C., and who after over three years' service in France was called upon to make the great sacrifice.

In the early days of the war, when the need for shells was so urgent, Messrs. Fry did all in their power to assist in the output of munitions, and supplied through their Engineering Department a large number of 18-pounder shells. At the outbreak of war a branch of the St. John Ambulance Association, numbering about fifty members, was in existence, and found ample opportunity for rendering service; and during



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the war various members of this branch assisted in the disembarkation of wounded soldiers at Avonmouth and the detrainning and transport of wounded.

Large consignments of cocoa and chocolate were dispatched to the various fields of operation in France, the Mediterranean, Mesopotamia, Salonika, Africa, Russia, and to various ships on foreign stations. In addition to these consignments, huge quantities of cocoa and chocolate were sent to camps in England and various naval depots for supplying the Fleet. The total tonnage of chocolate supplied to the troops represents some hundreds of millions of bars of chocolate.

These supplies were sent through the leading organisations, such as the Director of Army Contracts, Director of Naval Contracts, Army Canteen Committee, Navy and Army Canteen Board, Young Men's Christian Association, Church Army, Salvation Army, Red Cross, and other channels, in addition to which supplies were sent to the French and Belgian troops. Cocoa and chocolate in large quantities were supplied to the authorities for inclusion in parcels to prisoners of war, and nothing was more acceptable than these regular supplies. A War Relief Fund was inaugurated by the employees, and some of the funds subscribed were used for sending parcels to prisoners of war. Liberal allowances were given by the firm during the war to men who joined the Colours, thus relieving men who were fighting for our great cause from the anxiety of hardship for those left behind. War Savings Associations were established throughout the works, and regular contributions week by week were made towards the purchase of War Savings Certificates.

Three other local firms, Carsons Ltd., Charles Bond Ltd., and H. J. Packer & Company Ltd., employing over 3,000 hands, did their share. They readily released their employees of military age, and encouraged them in every way to join up. Few firms could show a better record.

H. J. Packer & Company Ltd. equipped and ran a hospital of 100 beds for the wounded. So far as their chocolate was concerned, they supplied large quantities to the Navy and Army Canteen Board, and were always ready to help them to the utmost possible extent. These three firms promised to take back their employees who served, and they have not only done



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this, but have taken on many other men who have been demobilised.

### COAL MINING.

When hostilities began there were 2,300 men engaged in the local coal mining industry, and within the first two years of the war 700 of them joined the Colours. The number of men who came to work as miners in Bristol from other colliery districts was almost negligible, and to keep up the output all sorts of expedients were resorted to, such as hewers trimming their own coal or filling the trams after the coal had been hewn. An assurance was given every man and youth from the local collieries who joined the Colours that when he returned from the war and wished to be reinstated employment would be found him on his making application at the pit where he worked, and no single man or youth on his return from the Army who made such application was refused. In the matter of recruiting the men at the South Liberty Pit of the Ashton Vale Colliery Company gave a fine lead. On the declaration of war 450 workmen were employed at this pit, and 200 joined the Colours. This good example was copied to a satisfactory extent at collieries in the east end of the city. In the working of a colliery timber plays an important part, for upon pit props the safety of the miners to a considerable extent depends. Much of the timber used in the local pits before the war came from Norway and Denmark. The outbreak of hostilities lessened these supplies, and ultimately they practically ceased. It became imperative to get pit props in order that the underground workings at the collieries should be kept intact, and the falls of coal reduced to the minimum. To meet the need local woods and copses, including some that had not been touched by the tree-feller for years, were visited and powers obtained to get supplies of timber from such sources. Woodmen were scarce and hauliers difficult to obtain. The emergency was met by men from the collieries undertaking the new duties of wood-cutters, while others, leaving their work underground, aided in the transport of the felled timber. By expedients like these all the local collieries were kept going. A particularly kindly act was noticeable at the South Liberty Colliery during the war. The employers generously allowed a weekly allowance of house coal



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to the wives of the men who had joined up, and the miners, despite their arduous duties at the time, mined this weekly coal gift free of cost. From the Bristol Miners' Association the widows of men who fell were paid £2 each in death claims, and the number of men from the local collieries who lost their lives in the war was nearly 100.

The experienced Bristol Miners' Agent helped in various efforts on behalf of the miners who were serving with the Colours, and when military tribunals were established he assisted the Inspector of Mines for the Bristol area when miners came up for examination.

### COAL CONTROL.

One of the grave national difficulties which the Government had to deal with before the end of the war was the serious shortage of coal with which the country was faced in the early part of 1918. This was due principally to the fact that the great German advance at that time necessitated a further call upon the miners to provide men for the Army, which resulted in the already diminished output of coal from the mines being further reduced. The Germans had also overrun a large portion of the mining district in France, and greatly increased supplies had therefore to be made to our Allies. The fact that the requirements of the Government for the Navy and Army and for munition works had to be met in full, left deficiency in supply to fall on users for domestic consumption. In order to effect economies and ensure an equitable distribution of the available supplies amongst householders, the Government brought into operation a Household Fuel and Lighting Order, 1918. Under this Order every consumer of coal for domestic or quasi-domestic purposes, or industrial consumer of less than 100 tons per annum, was rationed in accordance with the number of rooms in occupation, or the varying requirements of the industry. The responsibility for carrying out the Order was placed upon the Local Authority through the Local Fuel and Lighting Committee. The Committee were composed of a Chairman, Alderman Sir George E. Davies, five independent members appointed by the City Council, representatives of the coal merchants, the coal dealers, the Gas Company, and the



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Electricity Undertaking, together with the Local Fuel Overseer. The Government having recommended that the Executive Officer, known as the Local Fuel Overseer, should be the Engineer or Surveyor to the Local Authority, Mr. L. S. McKenzie, City Engineer and Surveyor, was appointed to the position, and Mr. F. M. Hart acted as his deputy.

The work of the Order comprised the rationing of coal, gas and electricity, whether used for lighting or heating, the registration of all coal merchants and dealers, the regulation of supplies to merchants and dealers, the control of prices, the maintenance of reserve stocks of coal, and the efficient and equitable distribution of coal to consumers.

In Bristol—a city with 78,500 rateable premises, many of which were let out in flats or tenements—the work to be undertaken was considerable. Some idea of this is given by the following figures :—

Applications received	..	..	..	71,400
Requisitions issued	..	..	..	71,376
Special Assessments	..	..	..	2,313
Additional Allowances	..	..	..	3,083
Certificates issued	..	..	..	135,615
Letters written	..	..	(over)	12,000
Forms of Coupon issued	..	..	..	5,932
Visits to Premises	..	..	..	3,500

With the approach of winter the necessity for the steps taken to ration consumers soon began to be apparent, merchants complaining that they were unable to obtain supplies of coal sufficient to meet their customers' needs. In the early part of November, 1918, the question of supplies began to be a source of anxiety, and matters remained in this condition until the end of April, 1919. To meet the demands of the merchants and their customers the Committee resorted to what was known as the Controller's, or Emergency Coal, this being coal set aside for the purpose and supplied from the collieries in priority to all other. Emergency coal was purchased by the Local Authority and sold at cost price to the merchants whose needs were most acute. In this way 1,905 tons of coal were distributed, and there is no doubt that this was the means of preventing undue hardship amongst the poorer classes.



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Credit is due to the citizens of Bristol for the manner in which they accepted the control of one of the greatest necessities of life. Credit is also due to the coal merchants and dealers for their share in carrying out the regulations under the Order; much additional work was thrown upon the merchants and their staffs, and it was in a great measure due to their willing support that the rationing was successfully carried through. A large number of clerks, chiefly ladies, were engaged during the earlier part of the task, and several members of the City Engineer's permanent staff joined in the work, some of which was of an intricate character. It is pleasing to know that the excellence of administration of the Order in Bristol was recognised by the Coal Controller's Department.

### THE GAS INDUSTRY.

The urgent call for high explosives in the early days of the Great War was responded to by gas authorities throughout the kingdom. The Explosives Department of the Ministry of Munitions issued appeals for ever-increasing supplies of benzol and toluol, as the enemy had been accumulating supplies for years in anticipation of the war. The recovery of these valuable products at the gas works was at first effected by using gas tar as a washing agent, and large quantities were immediately placed at the disposal of the authorities. Eventually the more effective oil extraction process was adopted, and at the request of the Government special plants were erected by the Bristol Gas Company. During the war period 13,000,000 gallons of gas tar were delivered to the distillers' works, where the benzol, toluol, and other products were extracted and distributed to the War Department. In addition to this 360,000 gallons of crude benzol were produced by the oil process at the Bristol Gas Works. The total production of benzol products from the gas industry was 21,800,000 gallons of pure benzol, which represents about 1,200,000 tons of picric acid. Also 8,000,000 gallons of toluol, corresponding to 65,300 tons of the high explosive T.N.T. (tri-nitro-toluene), which was used so extensively in shells of all sizes, hand-grenades, rifle grenades, air bombs and trench mortars. When it is realised that the production of these alone



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was the means of making approximately 541 tons of T.N.T. and 1,420 tons of lyddite, Bristol may feel proud that it sacrificed a little in the lighting value of the gas for the sake of the great cause.

Food production and high explosive manufacture were largely dependent on the output of ammonia products, and during the war 37,000,000 gallons of crude ammoniacal liquor were produced at the various works of the Bristol Gas Company and delivered to the chemical works for final treatment. Considerable quantities of spent oxide of iron were also supplied by the same Company for the production of sulphuric acid.

Apart from the valuable bye-products, the abnormal demand for cooking and heating apparatus in the Army training centres, temporary hospitals, and Belgian hostels in the city was efficiently met by numerous installations of gas appliances. By no other means could cooking on such a scale for large numbers rapidly grouped together have been done so expeditiously or cheaply, or with such economy of labour.

Gas was also extensively utilised for power purposes in the munition and engineering works, boot and clothing factories and other war establishments. Gas furnaces were largely used in the various processes of shell production, and in the air-craft works, thus effectively assisting the speeding-up of production due to the availability of gas and its elasticity in application.

Owing to the shortage of petrol, gas was utilised to a considerable extent for motor vehicles, and the gas container attached to Bristol's fleet of motor omnibuses became a familiar sight in the latter part of the war period. Before the war not even the most optimistic gas official realised what a power his industry constituted in the direction of the provision of the essential products for war necessities, and even now few beyond the confines of the industry appreciate fully that it was due to the gas works and kindred establishments that we owed the unprecedented supplies of ingredients for high explosive production. The Director-General of Explosive Supplies, The Right Hon. Lord Moulton, K.C.B., F.R.S., paid a striking tribute to the industry when he officially stated that "without the direct aid of the gas industry, and further than that, the assistance and the knowledge which have been acquired by those who



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have devoted their lives to it, it would have been perfectly impossible for this country to have waged the campaigns of the last five years, or even for any but a trifling time to have resisted the overwhelming flood of enemies that has poured upon it."

### ELECTRICITY.

The adaptability of electricity caused an immediate demand for current from various industries when the maximum output of war or other material was desired. The advantage of having the power of a central station to draw upon in preference to depending on a small generating plant on the premises was recognised, and the demand for current increased as time went on. Munition works, shipyards, engineering establishments, clothing factories, tanneries, collieries, and other works depended on the Corporation mains for energy, and current was needed also for the Government explosive factory at Avonmouth. In all the demands made the Department was never found wanting. In an undertaking of such importance to the prosecution of the war it was impossible for all the employees to volunteer for active service, but as many members of the engineering and station staffs as could be spared were gradually called to the Colours, their places being taken by women, so that before the war ended the whole of the sub-stations were run entirely by women charge-engineers, who served their apprenticeship in a remarkably short time. At the Feeder Road Generating Station the duties of switchboard attendants and cleaners were also carried out by women. Of the clerical staff all but a handful of specially skilled men eagerly joined up, their places being filled by women clerks. Women meter readers were also substituted at the request of the Government for male meter readers. In all 102 employees of the Department responded to their country's call, nine made the supreme sacrifice, and seventeen were wounded. One member of the staff had the O.B.E. conferred upon him, five members won the Military Medal, one the Meritorious Service Medal, one the Croce-di-Guerra, and two were specially mentioned in Despatches. All the men whose lives were preserved, and who desired to return to their former positions, did so. The number who have returned disabled represents  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the total



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employees. The work of the Department was considerably hampered and increased by the operation of the Heating, Lighting and Power Order, superseded by the Household Fuel and Lighting Order, 1918. The Department were besieged by anxious citizens, who, whilst desirous of doing everything they could to effect economy, required information as to the amount of electricity they were allowed to use. A special staff were kept busy answering inquiries and giving advice as to the best methods of keeping within the limits of consumption laid down by the Order. It is gratifying to state that, with one or two small exceptions, the regulations were duly observed.

### MUSTARD GAS.

The manufacture of mustard gas was started at Chittening, near Henbury, in June, 1918, the Government sending there some thirty chemists to deal with the problem. The required gas was being produced in large quantities at the end of six weeks' experimental work, and then the number of chemists was reduced to half-a-dozen. Shells were filled by a large body of women and girls, who proved just as courageous as the men in sticking to the work, though there were sometimes quite a considerable number affected by the gas. On one morning there were 140 cases for hospital treatment, and in all during the period of the work nearly 1,300 persons were more or less seriously gassed. It must have cheered these workers to know that the first experiment with mustard gas shells proved most disastrous to the enemy. A report came from the Front that the British artillery first used the gas against the Hindenburg line on September 30th, 1918, with excellent effects. The enemy suffered great loss and the line was broken on a wide front. Shells filled at Chittening were, in fact, instrumental in winning a decisive battle. At the time of the Armistice shells of about 100 lb. were being prepared for the enemy at this factory.

### PROTECTION FROM GAS POISONING.

The use of poisonous gases for military purposes was no new idea. In warfare in ancient times the principle was adopted in a somewhat crude form. Resort to this method



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of warfare was, however, ruled out when organising British methods of attack and defence. The unexpected use of various gases by the German army, therefore, gave rise to a problem of great urgency and importance—the production of a simple equipment that would save our soldiers being overcome by the pervasive fumes. A Bristol scientist connected with the chemical department of Bristol University, Captain O. C. M. Davis, D.Sc., and a Bristol firm played a prominent part in the research and in carrying out the processes by which a large measure of protection was secured for our men. At first masks were hastily improvised, and then the Anti-Gas Department produced a respirator which served as an air-filter. When the wearer took a breath the poison-charged air passed through certain substances which either absorbed the deadly gas or neutralised it. Animal charcoal has been long known to possess remarkable capacity for absorbing many volumes of its own bulk of certain gases, and this was one of the chief constituents of the early filters. A large portion of the animal charcoal needed for this purpose was produced in St. Philip's Marsh, Bristol, at the works of Messrs. George Lockyer & Son Ltd. At first chlorine and phosgene were the gases used by the Germans, but afterwards with fiendish ingenuity more complicated mixtures were adopted and a change had to be made in the filter to meet the new peril. Experiments to this end were carried out in London by the Anti-Gas Department. Towards the end of 1916 the directors of George Lockyer & Son Ltd., of St. Philip's Marsh, Bristol, placed several of their retorts at the disposal of the Department, Mr. Thomas Lockyer, at the same time, giving his own services and those of his workmen for a considerable period without remuneration. Captain Davis was sent from London to collaborate with Mr. Lockyer, this officer having previously accomplished valuable work in discoveries relating to the charcoal necessary for anti-gas respirators. Many experimental burnings were made at St. Philip's Marsh, with the result that a new type of high-grade vegetable charcoal was found to be just the thing needed, and this was then produced on a large scale by Messrs. Lockyer. The investigation led also to the introduction of a new kind of charcoal-burning furnace. Bristol, therefore, has performed a special work in saving the lives of our men from enemy gas attack.



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### PROJECTED EXPLOSIVES FACTORY AT HALLEN.

The enormous consumption of explosives for war purposes led the British Government to decide upon the establishment of a huge factory for nitro-cellulose at Hallen. The area selected was in Gloucestershire, but was so near the Bristol boundary that arrangements were made with Bristol authorities to become responsible for various matters of local administration. Preparations were made to press forward the enterprise with the utmost speed, and thousands of men were brought from other parts of the country to take part in the work. The construction of roads, temporary buildings for offices and other uses, the laying of water mains to connect with Bristol Water Works Company's supply, and other features gave rise to scenes of the greatest activity. Suddenly, on May 18th, 1917, all these operations were stopped, and as quickly as possible the great staff of workmen and officials were leaving for their homes. At first there was an outcry against the abandonment of a project on which an enormous expenditure had already taken place, but fuller information produced a feeling in the public mind that the Government had done wisely in thus facing the new conditions that had arisen. The change of policy was due to the United States joining Great Britain and her Allies, and the assurance that the nitro-cellulose could be supplied much more economically from America than it could be produced in England. The Henbury factory would have been largely dependent on imported products, and it was calculated that for every ton of explosives four tons of raw material would have had to be brought across the Atlantic. Hence the order to cease constructional work, to arrange for the restoration of farms to the original owners, and in other ways to minimise as far as possible the inconvenience and loss inevitable from the abandonment of the enterprise. In May, 1919, it was reported by the Comptroller and Auditor-General that the total expenditure and commitments at the time of the abandonment amounted to over three and a half millions sterling, while the expenditure on wages and services for the reinstatement of the property had reached a quarter of a million. A considerable part of the former total was represented by land and other realisable property, but there was an irrecoverable expenditure



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of £647,499. £58,500 of this was represented by compensation to contractors with whom had been placed orders for plant amounting to £2,000,000. There were then still a number of matters awaiting adjustment.

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND SHIPPING.

It is very difficult to give an adequate account of the work done by the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Shipping during the war. Every man of business was obliged to adapt his methods to continually changing conditions due to loss of efficient members of his staff and workmen who went on military service, or to abnormal difficulties of procuring supplies or transport, and to the restrictions imposed by the Government. In the same way the business of the Chamber had to be continually adapted to meet the needs of members, and while the usefulness has never been so apparent, it is not easy to state exactly what has been accomplished in a short review.

Speaking generally, the chief activities of the Chamber during the war have been devoted to the assistance of members through the trade associations meeting under the auspices of the Chamber, and to helping to interpret and carry out the multitudinous orders from the Government. Marked progress was made in bringing together traders for conference, and the fact that it was possible thus to meet upon neutral ground, and with the facilities of the Chamber of Commerce available, was highly appreciated. The opportunities for consultation upon many difficult problems as they arose proved of great value, and it is hard to imagine how some questions could have been successfully settled without such an agency.

Apart from the more apparent advantages which have accrued, the Chamber of Commerce were the means of creating or improving a friendly feeling between competitors, which is of vast importance to the comfort and often to the efficiency of each. Each has been confronted with new and unexpected troubles during the war, but these have generally been shared by his rivals in trade. It is therefore a great satisfaction to those concerned that the best means of dealing with difficulties have so often been arrived at by such mutual consultation, and it is not too much to say many good friendships have been established.



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The Chamber were also of considerable service to the Government in distributing information or instructions. From the nature of things it was inevitable that those instructions should vary as circumstances changed, and as their precise bearing was not always easy to comprehend, a large amount of work was thrown upon the Chamber. Questions of the form of contracts, of shipment, of exchange, debts to and by alien enemies, insurances, and certificates of origin and destination, were among the many which had to be dealt with.

Problems of transport also naturally received a great deal of attention. The Chamber have again done their best to urge the Government to develop the system of canals, particularly that portion between Birmingham and Sharpness.

At the beginning of the war much was done to aid recruiting. The Chamber were also greatly interested in the increased production of munitions, until the excellent organisations, which afterwards appeared, were set up. The Council of the Chamber, through the President and Vice-Presidents, took part in the work of the many local War Committees and other special organisations. Among these were the Recruiting Committee, the Committee of the Bristol Volunteer Association, the Bristol Cadet Association, the War Pensions Committee, the National Service Committee, the Training of Munition Workers at Merchant Venturers' Technical College, Clerical Classes for Disabled Sailors and Soldiers, Grants and University Courses for discharged officers, and the Road Transport Board.

It should also be mentioned that the Chamber have been in close touch with the commercial life of the country in general through being linked up with the Association of British Chambers of Commerce in London, upon whose Executive the Bristol Chamber have always had one of their members. Thus it can be claimed that the Chamber did much useful and patriotic service for the country, and a very large amount of important work for its members and the city of Bristol at large. In a word, the Chamber quickly changed their ordinary course, as required by the exigencies of the war, and did their best to make it easier for their members to adapt their methods to fit in with the great changes which were so often taking place. Now that the war is ended the Chamber are taking part in the effort to restore the business part of the city to peace-time conditions.







Chapter X  
Organisation of Labour





P. 289.

ALDERMAN SIR BARCLAY J. BARON, J.P.  
(*Lord Mayor 1915-16, 1916-17*).



## CHAPTER X

### ORGANISATION OF LABOUR

FEARS OF UNEMPLOYMENT DISPELLED—MUCH WORK FOR WOMEN—  
THE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES—WAR MUNITION VOLUNTEERS—  
EFFECTS OF MILITARY SERVICE ACT—WOMEN IN THE FORCES AND  
ON THE LAND—TRAINING IN HANDICRAFTS—ABSORBING THE  
DEMOBILISED—LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S RECORD—MUNITIONS  
TRIBUNALS.

WHEN the war commenced it was thought that the industrial dislocation would produce serious unemployment. Experience soon dispelled the fear; the withdrawal of men for His Majesty's Forces lessened normal unemployment, and eventually created something akin to a labour famine. It would not have been possible to carry on had it not been for the readiness with which women by short training fitted themselves for performing duties hitherto carried out by the other sex. This occurred not only in vocations involving but little physical strain, such as clerical work, but in many branches of industry where it had never been supposed women would find a place. Women and girls acted as conductors on the tramcars, as letter carriers for the Post Office, performed much of the work of the milk delivery, filled the places of male shop assistants called to the Colours, carried out specialised operations in engineering shops engaged in the production of war material, besides rendering invaluable aid to the Red Cross Society and kindred organisations. The problem of rapidly augmenting the numbers of munition workers from the ranks of those who had never engaged in such occupations was rendered easier by the sub-division of the task, so that a single worker became responsible only for a few contributory operations. Thus in a comparatively short time was it found possible to prepare a youth under the military age, or a girl straight from a middle-class home, for filling an appointed place in the munition industry. At Horfield the Corporation of Bristol had completed



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the shell of a suite of new baths, and this structure was placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Munitions, and used as an Instructional Factory, in which relays of workers—nearly all young women—were taught to perform certain operations, so that when drafted into the actual workshops elsewhere they would not be unfamiliar with the work to be done or the implements to be used. Temporary buildings were erected in front of the main block, and an annexe afterwards added. At the opening of the institution an official communication was read in which the helpfulness of the Bristol Baths Committee was acknowledged. Many factories trained their own female operatives, and in accompanying the King and Queen on their tour in Bristol, Bath and Wilts a visitor could not help being impressed by seeing great workshops, equipped with all sorts of mechanism, manned—if this word may be used—by young women. After the war problems of great difficulty arose upon the demobilisation of the Forces, and to meet the abnormal unemployment the Government for a time provided an allowance for those out of work.

### THE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES.

The Ministry of Labour Employment Exchanges at Victoria Street, Stapleton Road, Kingswood and Avonmouth have played a great part in the war, and it is difficult to record in a short article the services they rendered in all directions. On August 4th, 1914, these Employment Exchanges received instructions to proceed with the work in connection with mobilisation. Orders were immediately given to secure tailors, boot repairers, clerks, etc., for despatch to the various Army Headquarters at Aldershot, Salisbury, and elsewhere. Special trains were requisitioned, and before six o'clock on the following morning some 300 to 400 men were collected together by the staff and despatched. The work in connection with mobilisation was so overwhelming that for three weeks after the outbreak of war the Exchanges did not close their doors night or day or Sundays. Boy Scouts readily offered their services as messengers. It was necessary to transform the Board Room at the Victoria Street Exchange into a sleeping apartment for these boys, and it is right here to acknowledge the excellent services they rendered.



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Following the period of mobilisation there was a slump in industry, and for several weeks the number of unemployed grew steadily, whilst the claims for unemployment benefit also mounted up. This was purely temporary, as trade soon recovered, and the demand for labour became enormous. The War Office found it necessary to commence the erection of camps in all parts of the country, and hundreds of carpenters, steel erectors, bricklayers, etc., were sent by the Bristol Exchanges to Salisbury Plain, Aldershot, and other places in the South-West. Following on the work of camp erection, the various engineers and aeroplane manufacturers began to require additional labour for their factories. The demand became so great that a shortage of skilled labour was soon felt.

Early in 1915, when the Ministry of Munitions was established, Bristol was honoured by a visit from the Right Hon. David Lloyd George, when reference was made to the scheme of War Munion Volunteers. The terms of enrolment guaranteed that the men who volunteered for service in any part of Great Britain would not suffer in wages, and in addition would be paid a subsistence of 17s. 6d. per week if working away from home. The first enrolments took place at the Guildhall in June, 1916. The engineers of Bristol and district responded nobly to the call, and altogether 4,500 men enrolled, of whom considerably over 2,000 were transferred under the terms of enrolment. It was also found necessary, in order to meet the requirements of the engineering firms in this district, to import some 700 volunteers of particular skill. The War Munion Volunteer scheme, however, was insufficient to meet the ever-increasing demand from the munition works, and the Ministry of Munitions introduced a scheme of dilution, by which the Trade Unions concerned agreed that unskilled men and women should be allowed to work on what had formerly been skilled men's work. Hundreds of women immediately volunteered for this class of work, and in addition to the women who secured employment in this district, thousands of women of Bristol volunteered and took up such work at Woolwich, Coventry, Birmingham, and elsewhere.

With the introduction of the first Military Service Act it was found necessary to obtain men and women to act as substitutes for workers who were required for the Army, and large numbers



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of men and women were placed in employment under the Substitution scheme.

For the first time in history women were enrolled in the Army and Navy, either under the Queen Mary Army Auxiliary Corps, Women's Royal Air Force, or the Women's Royal Naval Service. For these corps it was essential that the applicants should be of good repute and of a high standard of medical fitness. The women of Bristol responded eagerly, about 950 volunteering, of whom 350 were accepted. In addition some 350 women were accepted for the immobile section of the Women's Royal Air Force. In the immobile section women were enrolled for employment in the immediate district, which meant that they could live at home. As men were called to the Colours the shortage of labour in agriculture became serious, and the Women's Land Army was instituted. This work was very popular in Bristol and district, and the Land Army demonstrations which were held at the Colston Hall and in other centres, where members of the Army attended in their attractive uniform, doubtless stimulated the recruiting. The Women's Agricultural Committees for Gloucester and Somerset were obliged to hold Selection Boards at least once a week at the Victoria Street Exchange, and about 1,400 women volunteered, of whom some 660 were accepted and placed in employment. More details of some of these branches of women's activities appear in other chapters.

The Royal Air Force found that boys could do very useful work at the various depots, and about fifty boys joined up.

Under the Military Service Act of 1918 there was introduced a scheme of War Work Volunteers, which allowed men over forty-one years of age and of low category, and all men over the age of forty-five, to take up approved Government work, instead of joining the Army. Over 600 local men were given work under this scheme. Throughout the period of the war the general work of the Exchanges grew by leaps and bounds, and the following statistics will give some idea of the work for the last twelve months before the cessation of hostilities :—



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	No. registered.	Local vacancies notified.	Vacancies filled locally.	Vacancies filled in other districts by local people.
Men ..	22,185	15,030	10,549	6,562
Women ..	15,685	7,489	6,126	2,641
Boys ..	4,973	2,719	1,985	151
Girls ..	2,903	1,796	1,099	31
	<hr/> 45,746 <hr/>	<hr/> 27,034 <hr/>	<hr/> 19,759 <hr/>	<hr/> 9,385 <hr/>

From 1917 a steady and ever-increasing stream of discharged sailors and soldiers came to the Exchange, and it was found that although the employers of Bristol engaged hundreds of these men, a considerable number, owing to their injuries, were unable to obtain employment. Bristol Employment Exchange was to the forefront in taking up training schemes (in co-operation with the Local War Pensions Committee) to enable these wounded heroes to obtain work suitable to their capacity. Local Technical Advisory Committees were therefore set up in various trades, and schemes inaugurated for training these men.

The first scheme set up was the Boot and Shoe Repairing, which commenced in October, 1917, at the Merchant Venturers' Technical College, Rosemary Street, and up to the middle summer of 1919 forty-one men were passed out of the class after twelve months' intensive training. Most of these have started in business on their own account, the Committee keeping a watchful eye on their activities and future well-being. Several other schemes were set up. Bespoke Tailoring, which commenced in October, 1917, at the Merchant Venturers' Technical College, was one of these. A scheme for Dental Mechanics was commenced in October, 1918, at the Bristol University. A further scheme for training men for Aircraft (wood-work) was commenced on November 25th, 1918, at the Merchant Venturers' Technical College. Schemes under the Furniture Advisory Committee in Upholstery and Cabinet Making were commenced at the Merchant Venturers' Technical College in December, 1918, and February, 1919. Advisory Committees were also set up for dealing with the Building, Printing, Wholesale Tailoring and Watch and Clock Repairing.



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In each case a Committee representing the Employers and Trade Unions of the respective trades was set up to supervise the training of the men in question, Mr. Leonard Broad acting as the Secretary.

Immediately following the Armistice the work of the Exchange greatly increased in view of the Government's decision to give an out-of-work donation to members of His Majesty's Forces below commissioned rank, and civilians who were employed contributors under the National Health Insurance Act. The wisdom of this scheme was apparent, as immediately after November 25th, 1918, thousands of workers became unemployed, and without the payment of this benefit a serious crisis would no doubt have occurred. The premises at Victoria Street soon proved inadequate, and early in 1919 it was found necessary to take the smaller Colston Hall for the Women's Department, so that the whole of Victoria Street could be available for men who were unemployed. To give some idea of the extent of the growth of unemployment since the Armistice, the following statistics show the numbers unemployed on May 9th, 1919 :—

Men	..	..	..	7,521
Women	..	..	..	4,515
Boys	..	..	..	505
Girls	..	..	..	214

The grand total of out-of-work benefit paid during the four weeks ended May 9th, 1919, was £58,883 12s. 9d.

The Employment Exchanges were also heavily involved in demobilisation. Under the Ministry of Labour scheme of demobilisation, it was considered the men to be first demobilised from the Army should be the men of supreme industrial importance, described as pivotal men, and that other men should be demobilised according to their importance in industry.

### THE LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

The first Chairman of the Local Advisory Committee was the late Sir Barclay J. Baron, and the constitution of the original Committee comprised fifteen members on the employers' panel, fourteen on the workmen's panel, and four co-opted



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members, with Mr. Leonard Broad as the Secretary. The functions were to advise the Minister of Labour regarding the policy to be adopted in connection with the work of the Employment Exchanges, and such other functions as should be determined upon from time to time. The first meeting was held on Wednesday, December 12th, 1917. The following among other subjects engaged the Committee's attention: (1) substitution, (2) transfer of enrolled men, (3) concessions to discharged soldiers liable for recall for service, (4) the "clean cut" in relation to military service, (5) compensation for injuries received in the course of certain munition work, (6) excessive unemployment amongst women, (7) co-operation with War Pensions Committee, (8) imported labour, (9) general employment of women, (10) war work volunteer scheme, and (11) demobilisation and re-settlement. It will appear that the Committee determinedly tackled the many problems which arose in connection with local industrial life. For the better performance of such varied duties, it was found expedient to create a number of special sub-committees. Early in the history of the Committee a desire was shown to enlarge the number, and applications for representation were received from various bodies. The claims were investigated by a small but representative sub-committee, with the result that the main body were considerably strengthened by the addition of several valued members.

One of the most important duties devolving upon the Committee was the provision of substitutes for men called to the Colours, and the determination of the suitability of civilian and military substitutes offered to local firms. Considerable complications arose in this connection, especially in relation to the serious delays arising in the release from the Army of military substitutes who had been accepted in lieu of men already released by firms for service with the Colours. Very vigorous action was taken in this direction, strong resolutions and reports being sent to the War Office, and deputations formed to the Regional Headquarters of the Ministry of National Service. The outcome was that the War Office agreed to certain reforms, and the provision of substitutes was undoubtedly hastened.

Discharged soldiers who had not served abroad, and time-



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expired men who had not been officially reported wounded, were liable to recall to the Colours under the terms of the Military Service Acts. The Government, however, granted certain concessions to such men, and exempted those from further service who undertook work of national importance. A list of occupations of national importance was published, but the Local Advisory Committee had certain discretionary powers, and were authorised to advise the Exchange officers in obtaining the required employment for those men. The Advisory Committee might further, at their discretion, extend the period of time, and the members sat in rota to hear applications for extension of such time. In this way a large number of discharged men had their cases considered, and the fact that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee were almost invariably accepted by the Military Authorities greatly added to the appreciation of the Committee's work by the men themselves.

In connection with the "clean cut," which called to the Colours all men of a certain age, irrespective of occupation, the Committee realised the necessity of making strong recommendations with a view to the modification of the drastic provision. In the crisis then existing the Military Authorities could not accede to the requests of the Committee, who, however, considered it still incumbent upon them to point out certain anomalies which arose.

In August, 1918, the Committee received information as to the risk incurred by workers in certain local munition works, and after an investigation the Committee made representations with a measure of success; and though the signing of the Armistice led to the stoppage of work at the factories in question, yet the efforts of the Committee to obtain increased allowances to persons who had been injured in their occupation there were attended, it is believed, by considerable benefits to the workpeople.

An excessive amount of unemployment among women arose in January of 1918, when the Russian and other contracts were suddenly stopped, and the women engaged at certain local factories came out of work. To consider the situation a special Women's Sub-Committee were appointed, and gradually these women were provided with other employment at



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H.M. Factory, Chittening, the Royal Aircraft Depot, Yate, and in other places.

A Complaints Sub-Committee and an interviewing rota were set up for a special purpose. Whereas the public had had every opportunity of ventilating their grievances, real or supposed, against Exchange officials, it was found that the officials, on the other hand, had no means of defence, and were at times subjected to considerable unpleasantness and even vilification. In order, therefore, to protect and support the officials in their duties, and to provide a court of appeal for the public, this Sub-Committee were appointed in February, 1918, to investigate complaints and to interview the complainants. Up to the time of writing this narrative only two complaints had been preferred, and both proved to be unjustified. Other duties assigned to the Sub-Committee were to interview and advise discharged sailors and soldiers, and to administer concessions granted to discharged men liable to recall. Eventually it was decided that the complex work should be undertaken, not by a special sub-committee, but by the whole committee arranged on a rota system. Still later representatives of the various associations of discharged sailors and soldiers were co-opted to the rota. In that way the whole Committee learned to appreciate more fully the difficulties which the Exchange officials were called on to meet.

Particularly arduous was the work devolving upon the women's departments of local Exchanges. Besides the normal work, they recruited for the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, the Women's Royal Naval Service, the Women's Royal Air Force, the Land Army, and various munition works. A representative Sub-Committee were appointed, and a complaints and interviewing rota established. The Sub-Committee also dealt with questions of demobilisation of women workers, the re-settlement of such workers in normal industry, the problem of domestic workers, and so forth.

At the end of 1918 the Advisory Committee were in the throes of demobilisation, re-settlement, and allied problems, besides the administration of the out-of-work donation scheme and other comprehensive matters. It was estimated that from the Army alone 45,000 men would return to the Committee's area, in addition to which there were the women of the Auxiliary



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Forces, and men and women discharged from munition works. On November 25th, 1918, the Government scheme of out-of-work donations to members of the Forces below commissioned rank who had served in the war and to certain members of the women's corps came into operation. The scope embraced sailors, soldiers, airmen, and women's corps, excluding officers and officials. The original donation was 24s. a week (4s. a day) to men and 20s. (3s. 4d. a day) to women, with supplementary donation for dependent children under 15 years of age, at the rate of 6s. a week for the first and 3s. a week for each additional child. From December 14th the rates for men were increased to 29s. and for women to 25s., the children's allowance being unaltered. From November 25th to December 6th, 1918, only one payment was made, 1,382 applications for policies for the donation having been made in the area as follows: women 686, men 271, juveniles 125, sailors, soldiers, etc. 300, and £267 12s. 4d. was paid out in donations. At the end of 1918 it was computed that at the Bristol, Avonmouth, Eastville, and Kingswood Exchanges a total of 45,746 persons had been registered, 27,034 vacancies had been notified, 19,759 had been filled locally, and 9,385 had been filled in other districts; and already it was abundantly evident that the Committee had become a great influence in industrial affairs.

It is interesting to note that in September, 1918 (war period), the military composition of the staffs of the Bristol Employment Exchanges was as follows, including all administrative heads: finally rejected, 1; grade 3, 6; grade 2, 6; over new military age, 3; discharged soldiers, 12; total, 28. Later some of the old members who joined the Forces at the beginning of the war returned, and the staff were further increased by a number of discharged soldiers.

Since the Armistice the Committee have concentrated on securing work for the large number of unemployed men and women. In February, 1919, a deputation of the Committee waited upon the Chairman of the spending Committees of the Bristol Corporation, and urged the execution without delay of the following works of construction: Low Level road to Avonmouth, housing schemes, repair and widening of roads, erection of new schools, dock extension, etc. The Committee also interviewed the Minister of Labour on the same subject. On



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April 30th Mr. Leonard Broad, Manager of the Employment Exchange, and Secretary of the Local Advisory Committee, resigned to take up a commercial position, and was entertained by the Committee to a dinner at which he was presented with an illuminated address and a cheque. He was succeeded by Mr. P. Handley, formerly manager of the Ipswich Employment Exchange.

It was a great blow to the Committee when in June their Chairman, Alderman Sir Barclay J. Baron, passed away. He was the life and soul of the Committee, whose successful achievements were in a large measure due to his activities.

### THE MUNITIONS TRIBUNALS.

The Munitions of War Acts, 1915 to 1917, made provision for furthering the efficient manufacture, transport and supply of munitions of war. For the purpose of enforcing the provisions of these statutes two classes of Tribunals were established. Those of the first class, known as "General Munitions Tribunals," were given jurisdiction over considerable areas, and were empowered to enforce the more important provisions of the statutes. Those of the second class, known as "Local Munitions Tribunals," were established for smaller districts, and their jurisdiction was limited to minor offences under the statutes, the control of leaving certificates, and claims for compensation for wrongful dismissal under the statutes. The Tribunal in each case consisted of a Chairman with legal experience, sitting with an employer and an operative as assessors. The General Munitions Tribunal for the South-Western Division was presided over by Mr. W. B. Yates, Barrister-at-Law; and the Bristol Local Tribunal by Mr. E. H. C. Wethered, and the Deputy-Chairman Mr. F. A. Wilshire, Barristers-at-Law. The Clerk to both Tribunals was Mr. W. A. Roberts, Solicitor. There were panels of assessors, employers and operatives (men and women), for the General Munitions Tribunal for the Bristol District of the Division and for the Bristol Local Munitions Tribunal.

Very little trouble occurred in the West of England in working the Munitions of War Acts, and the General Munitions Tribunal at Bristol sat on only nine occasions, and disposed



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altogether of 265 cases. The Bristol Local Munitions Tribunal sat as occasion required, and up to the signing of the Armistice dealt with 917 complaints for offences under the Acts, and 344 cases with reference to leaving certificates and claims for compensation. A large number of other cases were settled out of court. The Local Munitions Tribunal used its influence to avoid disputes, or to effect a settlement of such as arose and came within its province. The Tribunal met with considerable success in the pursuit of this policy. The decisions of the Tribunal were generally felt to be sensible and fair, and its proceedings commanded the confidence of both employers and workpeople. In several cases its services were requested as a Court of Arbitration for minor disputes, and these it was able to settle with expedition and to the satisfaction of the parties concerned.

With the signing of the Armistice the work of the General Munitions Tribunal came to an end, but the Local Munition Tribunal was continued for the purposes of enforcing prescribed and substituted rates, under the Wages (Temporary Regulations) Acts, 1918 and 1919, and settling disputes under the Restoration of Pre-War Practices Act, 1919.



## Chapter XI

### Social and Financial Problems







## CHAPTER XI

### SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S FUND—WARD RELIEF COMMITTEES—FOOD SUPPLY AND PRICES—THE WHEAT COMMISSION—FOOD CONTROL—THE PROVISION TRADE—ALLOTMENTS AND SMALL HOLDINGS : GREAT INCREASE—WOMEN LAND-WORKERS—NATIONAL KITCHENS—WAR SAVINGS : BIG SUBSCRIPTIONS TO LOANS—HOUSING THE PEOPLE : GREAT GARDEN CITY SCHEMES—JOINT INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCES.

A RUSH to the shops to buy food was made in the first days after the declaration of war, and a tendency to raise prices was one of the results. The Lord Mayor and leading members of the provision trade gave prompt assurances with regard to food supplies, and the shopkeepers as a rule were firm in checking attempts at hoarding. Later on, when hoarding became penal, there were a few cases brought to light, but nothing very serious was discovered, and the only notable case of food wasting arose out of the indifference of a body of imported labourers, who were alleged to be so pampered that they would not eat stale bread or crust. As a consequence their hostel keeper got into trouble.

As the enemy submarine campaign developed rationing was gradually enforced, and for the most part the citizens bore it patriotically. A few tempted bakers to supply new bread, and the bakers when found out were fined. The Food Control Committee carried out the multitudinous and perplexing orders of the Ministry of Food with remarkable smoothness. At a late stage national kitchens were opened ; they would have come earlier if the public had asked for them, but well-paid employment was abundant, and people felt independent of what they mistakenly supposed would be a scheme of soup kitchens.

Bristol entered heartily into the land cultivation movement, and took up the various War Loans very liberally. A difficulty which became much greater as the fighting men returned to



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civil life was that of housing, and the Corporation are committed to a scheme for providing 5,000 dwellings on the garden city plan.

### THE PRINCE OF WALES'S FUND.

At the outbreak of war there was much fear of unemployment, and local authorities were asked by the Government to minimise the evil as much as possible. Bristol City Council needed no stimulus. Steps were taken at once to meet the anticipated distress. A Committee commenced to collect subscriptions for the Prince of Wales's National War Relief Fund, and Ward Committees were set up to organise employment and distribute relief in necessitous cases. There was a considerable number of people temporarily thrown out of work, and schemes were set afoot for their benefit, but as war contracts for clothing and other needs of the Forces soon began to reach the city re-employment was possible, and the Army's drain on the male population of military age gradually absorbed all the unemployed men, and eventually brought into the factories large numbers of women who hitherto had not worked outside their homes. When the call for munitions grew more urgent still, larger numbers of women, many in good circumstances, came forward to help.

A few months sufficed to show that there would be no serious distress for want of employment, and indeed it soon became difficult for the Ward Committees to find any cases at all, and they were disbanded at an early stage in the war period. But in the meantime there had been a generous response to the appeal for subscriptions to the Prince of Wales's Fund. The well-to-do sent their cheques, and the less prosperous gave just as freely of their means. Systematic weekly or monthly collections were arranged. The Municipal Officers' Association subscribed a percentage of their salaries, house to house collections were taken up, and boxes were displayed in places of business. Citizens of all conditions, from the school age to the most advanced years, freely helped, and when the time came for closing the Fund it was found that Bristol had contributed over £33,500 of the grand total raised throughout the country. And all this time the citizens had been giving freely in goods and money to Red Cross and many other war charities.



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### FOOD SUPPLY AND PRICES.

Before the war alarmist statements were sometimes heard to the effect that the British people would be starved in a few weeks in the event of a great struggle affecting the ships bringing the huge supplies on which the nation had long depended. Happily experience has proved better than theory. In some cases no doubt the effects of high prices have been felt severely by persons of limited means, but speaking generally the wolf has never been at our door—not even in the whole country. Certain things have been unprocurable, others have been scarce, but of vital necessities there has been no famine. A Bristol teacher in a working-class part of the city declared about the middle of the war period that his schoolboys were better fed and better clothed than before August, 1914. The destitution due to irregular employment disappeared when labour of all kinds was at a premium, and the allowances made to wives and families of men who were away, if not large, were dependable. Prior to the war the Education Committee had to supply many underfed scholars with meals; the demand for this assistance dwindled to very small proportions as the conflict with the Central Powers proceeded.

Food control is an extremely difficult matter, and traders had a troublesome time with coupons and Orders. The Orders were issued in great profusion and with such short notice that it was exceedingly difficult to maintain a working knowledge of them. But the whole scheme operated far better than anyone could have expected. Regulations were all carefully enforced in Bristol, but the prosecutions were comparatively few, and the public often read in the newspapers of working men's organisations passing resolutions of thanks to and appreciation of the efforts of the local Food Control Committee.

As to the cost of food, Mr. G. H. Roberts, the Food Controller, in May, 1919, made the following statement in the House of Commons: "As regards food, the Ministry of Labour, using a schedule of articles estimated to represent approximately the average consumption of a working-class family in 1914, place the increase over July, 1914, at 94 per cent. in April, 1917; at 106 per cent. in November, 1917; at 106 per cent. in April, 1918; and 133 per cent. in November, 1918. Their latest



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estimate is for April 1st of this year, and is 113 per cent. above July, 1914, or 9 per cent. reduction as compared with November last. This assumes that the family budget has remained unchanged both as to articles and as to quantities. It should be observed, however, that in the Report of the Working Classes Cost of Living Committee, 1918, of which Lord Sumner was Chairman, the actual increase in expenditure on food between July, 1914, and June, 1918, was stated to be only 90 per cent., when the Ministry of Labour index of retail prices stood at 108 per cent. above the pre-war figure; and, on the basis of the budget used in that Report, the increase up to date is approximately the same as in June last, namely 90 per cent."

### THE WHEAT COMMISSION.

One of the outstanding facts of the war was that it never became necessary to ration bread. Appeals were made to citizens to economise in its use; the use of flour was economised by departures from the ordinary methods of milling and by the admixture of potatoes, but from first to last bread was purchaseable in unlimited quantities. This would not have been possible had there not been organised arrangements for ensuring and dealing with supplies. Large purchases were made by the State, and early in July, 1917, five Landed Grain Committees were appointed by the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies to see to the storing and distribution of imported grain. Three Committees had their respective headquarters at London, Liverpool and Bristol, and the other two covered Scotland and Ireland. The area assigned to the Bristol Committee, of which Mr. Henry Hosegood acted as Chairman, was a large one. It embraced sixteen counties, viz. Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, Glamorganshire, Brecknockshire, Radnorshire, Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire, and Pembrokeshire.

The duties of the Committee were to receive and put into store all the grain, flour and cereal products arriving in port in this area, to deal with all formalities in connection with the discharge, the landing, the warehousing and distribution, and to see that these foodstuffs were kept in proper condition.



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The largest quantities handled were represented by the wheat and flour purchased by the Government through the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies, in order to supply the needs of the nation, and to meet the problem created by the losses suffered by the mercantile marine through submarine sinkings. In face of enemy attacks no one could foresee what proportion of the grain shipped from Canada, the United States, Australia, South Africa, the Argentine and other parts of the world would safely reach this country. It was, therefore, incumbent upon the Wheat Commission to purchase and store an unlimited supply of grain, particularly wheat and flour, so as to prepare for all eventualities.

Probably very few Bristol citizens, except those immediately connected with the trade, were aware of the enormous quantities of grain which passed through the docks at Avonmouth, Portishead and Bristol to local warehouses, and also to the many distant inland centres. To safeguard the food supplies of London and the principal northern towns it was necessary to leave the storage accommodation at the docks available for further supplies in case an emergency should arise, in which case grain steamers destined for east coast ports would have to be diverted to the Bristol Channel. At the most critical time, when the whole of the hosts of the German armies were making their last and fruitless efforts to gain possession of the Channel Ports on the northern coast of France, and the Dover Straits were threatened in consequence, Bristol was ready to supply London and other districts in addition to the needs of its own area. It can therefore be seen why the storage accommodation at the docks had to be kept vacant, and why all other available room had to be sought to warehouse the supplies for the western area. In addition to the usual room which could be obtained for the storage of grain locally, as well as the space obtained at the principal inland centres, it was necessary to resort to buildings which had never been utilised for this purpose. As an extreme measure the grain was actually stored in chapels, schoolrooms and skating rinks.

Although, owing to its position, the Bristol Channel was exceptionally fortunate in losing very few steamers destined to its ports, several vessels on their way to the east coast which were torpedoed in the English Channel managed to get



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into Falmouth, Dartmouth and Plymouth, and the salvage operations were conducted from Bristol. Large quantities of wet grain, which would otherwise have been lost to the nation, were railed to Bristol, kiln dried, and used for cattle food. In the case of flour which had been submerged the bags were dried, the contents reconditioned, and a considerable percentage saved for human food. It should be explained that when a bag of flour has been under water for several weeks an outer crust of several inches thick is formed on the flour, and this protects the remainder of the contents. The flour within the crust is in no way affected if quickly handled and reconditioned.

The following table showing the quantities of grain which arrived from July, 1917, to July, 1919, in the area controlled by the Landed Grain Committee, Bristol, together with the respective principal ports, may be of interest :—

Bristol, Avonmouth and Portishead	about 810,000 tons.
Sharpness .. .. .	„ 253,000 „
Cardiff .. .. .	„ 316,000 „
Barry Dock .. .. .	„ 102,000 „
Swansea .. .. .	„ 109,000 „
Plymouth .. .. .	„ 62,000 „
<hr/>	
Total about	1,652,000 tons.

At an average of £20 per ton, the value of the grain passing under the control of the Bristol Committee was therefore £33,040,000.

### FOOD CONTROL.

In June, 1917, which was perhaps the most critical period of the war so far as the supply and distribution of foodstuffs were concerned, Lord Rhondda was appointed Food Controller in succession to Lord Devonport, and he at once proceeded to re-organise the Ministry of Food with the view of providing adequate machinery to deal with the importation, production, distribution and prices of foodstuffs. One of the most important steps taken by him was to decentralise the work of the Ministry to a large extent by the appointment of local Food Control Committees throughout the country, upon which bodies he



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conferred large powers in connection with the distribution and prices of food. In Bristol the Council on August 14th, 1917, appointed a local Food Control Committee for the city. The first meeting of the Committee was held on August 20th, 1917, when Alderman W. H. Elkins was elected Chairman. Mr. W. J. Upton was appointed as Secretary and Executive Officer to the Committee. When the Committee were appointed their chief duties were to make arrangements for the rationing of sugar and the control of retail meat prices and the wholesale and retail prices of milk. The first step taken by the Committee in connection with the Sugar (Distribution) Scheme was to register all retailers, and subsequently to issue authorities to all residential and catering establishments and institutions and to manufacturers of commodities containing a quantity of sugar, fixing the maximum quantities of sugar to be purchased by such establishments, and the persons from whom they could obtain a ration of sugar. The next step was to register each consumer with a retailer, and this was done by issuing a Sugar Registration Card to each householder. Almost immediately, however, it was found that this system would not be effective in dealing with persons removing from one address to another, which cases at that time were very numerous. It was therefore decided by the Ministry of Food to substitute an individual registration card. The first rationing scheme for sugar came into operation on January 1st, 1918, the ration being 8 oz. per head per week.

At the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 a great wave of unrest was passing over the country, caused by the unequal distribution of various essential foodstuffs, particularly margarine, in regard to which various methods were adopted for improving the system of distribution. Owing to the long queues which were formed daily outside certain shops in the city, the Food Control Committee arranged for large quantities of margarine to be sold by retail at the Corn Exchange. Owing to the certainty of obtaining supplies at the Exchange, crowds of people congregated to purchase, and the queue extended from Exchange West through St. Nicholas Street, High Street, Corn Street to St. Stephen's Street. In one hour approximately 6,000 half-pound packets of margarine were sold. It was soon realised that this method of distribution could not be continuously carried on, and that a rationing scheme was the only solution



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of the difficulty. In order to meet the situation throughout the country, Lord Rhondda empowered local Food Control Committees to establish rationing schemes for certain foodstuffs, as far as their particular districts were concerned, under which each person would be entitled to obtain a fixed quantity of the rationed foodstuff from a nominated retailer. Owing to the uneven distribution of margarine, tea and meat, the Bristol Food Control Committee on January 7th, 1918, adopted a local rationing scheme for meat, butter and margarine, and tea. The ration of meat was 12 oz. per week (exclusive of pork and offal) ; butter and margarine 4 oz. per week, and tea 2 oz. per week. In July, 1918, the Food Controller rationed the following articles throughout the country, viz. meat of all kinds (including bacon), sugar, butter and margarine, and lard. The coupon system of rationing was first introduced for meat under the Meat (Rationing) Order of 1918, but under the general rationing scheme of July much more comprehensive arrangements were made, the coupons being contained in books sufficient to cover the period up to November, 1918, when new Ration Books sufficient to cover the period up to May 3rd, 1919, were issued. The retailers registered under various Orders of the Food Controller in Bristol comprised 269 butchers, 500 fish retailers, 1,500 for potatoes, 1,700 for flour, 1,700 for sugar, 1,580 for butter, 1,600 for margarine, 1,737 for tea, 109 for pork, 1,158 for lard, 1,158 for bacon and ham, and 900 for milk.

The Bristol Food Control Committee from the date of their appointment dealt with various questions which arose from time to time in a business-like manner, and whilst being just to traders, they secured that, as far as they were concerned, the interests of the consumer were protected. On more than one occasion they had to bring great pressure to bear on the Ministry of Food. One instance was in October, 1917, when after very careful consideration the Food Control Committee decided to fix 6d. per quart as the maximum retail price of milk during October, 1917, instead of 7d. per quart as fixed by the Food Controller. This decision was strongly opposed by the milk retailers, who brought pressure to bear on the Ministry in regard to the matter, with the result that at first the Food Controller declined to confirm the decision of the local Committee. As the result, however, of the firm attitude adopted by the



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Committee, they secured the price which they had fixed. In the summer of 1918 the power of fixing maximum retail prices for milk was transferred from the local Food Control Committees to the Ministry of Food. This was an unfortunate step for the consumer, as the prices subsequently fixed by the Food Controller were higher than would have been the case if the power had still remained in the hands of local Food Control Committees. In July, 1918, it was brought to the notice of the Committee that there were very large stocks of bacon lying in the various warehouses throughout the city which were in great danger of being wasted through not being absorbed quickly enough under the rationing scheme. The Committee made representations to the Ministry urging that bacon should be decontrolled and sold free from restriction, but no move was made by the Ministry until the Committee threatened to take the law into their own hands and free this commodity. Thereupon the Food Controller sanctioned the free sale of bacon in Bristol on and from July 24th, 1918. Subsequently on July 28th, 1918, this concession was extended to the rest of the country. The action of the Bristol Committee on this occasion undoubtedly resulted in the saving of many hundreds of tons of valuable foodstuff.

Ration Cards were issued to the public by the Committee in November, 1917, January, 1918, May, 1918, July, 1918, and November, 1918. In order to carry out this work in the short time available on each occasion, the Committee had to obtain the services of a large staff. On the first occasion, in November, 1917, the work was carried out almost entirely by voluntary helpers, and the Committee expressed their thanks for the valuable assistance rendered. There is no doubt that the situation in the city was very serious at the end of 1917, and but for the steadying effect which the introduction of the rationing scheme had on the public, considerable trouble would have been experienced. It is not possible to set out the ramifications of the Committee's work, and it must suffice to say that the work of the local Food Control Committees throughout the country had a most important bearing on the successful prosecution of the war, as they undertook the responsible duty of supervising the distribution and prices of foodstuffs to the public. It should also be said that the various rationing schemes which were put into effect threw a consider-



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able amount of extra work on retailers of meat, sugar and butter at a time when, owing to their assistants being called up for military service, they were less able to carry on than in normal times ; and the fact that these and other retailers in the city of Bristol all carried out the duties assigned to them in an efficient manner affords ample proof of their patriotism and desire to render service to the community as a whole.

After the Armistice there again arose a good deal of unrest, which was believed to be in no small measure due to high prices of the necessities of life, and a strong suspicion of profiteering. The Government took action in 1919, and passed The Profiteering Act. Under this Act special Profiteering Committees were set up by local authorities. In Bristol the local Food Control Committee were entrusted with the administration of the law, and sittings to hear complaints began in October. The local authorities also gave facilities for street markets, but the enterprise, carried on by ex-service men, was of short duration, and ended in consequence of financial trouble.

### THE PROVISION TRADE.

During the war the position of the provision trade of Bristol has been harassing, but its members acted with great public spirit all through. Approached by the Military Authorities, they put every facility in the way of their men for joining up ; staffs were thus reduced to an almost unworkable basis, but firms carried on as best they could with those of non-military age. At first they could not avoid making profit, as all their stocks increased in value, but a little later Prices Committees were formed all over the country to regulate the trade, and prevent undue profits being made. The rules thus applied were loyally carried out. As time passed it became increasingly difficult owing to shipping conditions, shortage of railway trucks, delay at docks, scarcity of labour, to keep the country supplied with food, while the very high values might well have caused importers to pause, as they were taking large risks beyond those incurred with perishable goods. But they always took the risk, and no real shortage occurred. Eventually the Ministry of Food assumed control. During this control the many vexatious and difficult regulations were carried out



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practically without exception, and the trade acted in unison through their Associations, and helped the Government in every possible way. Large quantities of bacon were prepared in Bristol for the Navy and Army, and the closest attention was paid to see that our fighting men got nothing but the very best. As far as can be ascertained, every man as he was demobilised was taken back to his position ; many places had been filled quite well with female labour, but employers remembered their pledges and carried them out. Labour troubles had to be faced, but these never came to a strike. Disputes were dealt with in conference with the different unions, with whom the trade were in close and amicable touch. These friendly relations happily continued after the Peace Treaty was signed by Germany and the Allied Governments.

### ALLOTMENTS AND SMALL HOLDINGS.

When the German submarine menace became serious, a widespread desire was shown in Bristol to increase the home production of food. The allotment question consequently came much more into prominence than in the past. The Civic Committee at that time had more applications for ground than they had been able to supply, and the number increased in consequence of the threatened war conditions. Whilst there appeared to be an overwhelming difficulty in obtaining suitable land for permanent cultivation, it was noted by citizens that there were many vacant plots lying idle in various parts of the city, and it was clear that the majority of them would not be occupied by buildings while the war lasted. Their existence aroused a strong desire on the part of the people for an opportunity to bring them under cultivation. For some time no effective action in this direction was taken, and a discussion at a City Council meeting called to consider the general question, and the use of parts of the public parks for growing food, had no practical result. Eventually, at a Guildhall meeting attended by representatives of the Civic Allotment Committee, a Vacant Lands Society was formed, with Mr. E. H. C. Wethered, barrister-at-law, as Chairman. While many acres of land were readily available for temporary use, an obstacle was found to exist in the compensation clause of the Allotment and Small Holdings Act, owing to the financial



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responsibilities it placed upon owners when they desired to regain possession of their ground. The Board of Agriculture declined to view the Act as a serious hindrance, and for a time there was a deadlock. Other cities had a similar experience to that of Bristol, and ultimately, as the outcome of representations from many quarters, the Board in 1916 issued a Vacant Lands Order, giving local authorities power to make use of land not otherwise profitably occupied. Much valuable time had been lost, but the effect of the new departure was at once apparent. Other Orders followed, with the result that all over Bristol "war plots" were taken up by eager citizens, some of whom had little or no previous experience in gardening operations. In many cases their task was an extremely arduous one. Some pieces of ground were in the nature of rubbish heaps; other sites were overgrown with a luxuriant crop of couch-grass, thistles, and other noxious weeds, but by persistent hard work with pickaxe and spade a remarkable transformation was effected. Tons of stone were removed from many of the plots in the process, and undesirable vegetation was burned. Considerable help was rendered in deepening and fertilising the soil by supplies of leaves and street sweepings dumped free of charge by the civic scavengers. The outcome was the raising of magnificent crops, which made a very valuable contribution to the food supplies at a time of serious need. That was not the only result, for the success of the gardening operations by those who engaged in the work led a large number to take a permanent interest in the cultivation of the land, and made them anxious that measures should be adopted for securing permanent plots when the war ceased. The allotment movement also brought under cultivation many acres of land of a different kind. Tennis courts, cricket and football grounds were commandeered, and in their case the cultural operations were generally much simpler. Permanent allotments, managed by associations, also increased in number, and much stimulus was given to improved methods by shows in various districts, and by the offer of prizes for the best cultivated allotments in the city. In 1914 the Corporation held 218 acres, providing plots for 2,570 tenants. In November, 1919, the Small Holdings and Allotments Committee presented a report in which was contained the following summary of existing allotments:—



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	No. of		Area.		
	Grounds.	Plots.	a.	r.	p.
Corporation (permanent)	.. 61	5,300	377	0	35½
Corporation (temporary for which rent is paid)	.. .. 10	571	33	0	39
Associations .. .. .	.. 66	6,904	489	0	13
War plots (unrated sites)	.. 93	1,276	79	2	10
	230	14,051	979	0	17½

This, however, did not disclose the complete extent of operations. Many pieces of ground were privately rented and let off to tenants, and in a speech in December, 1919, Alderman Frank Moore, the Chairman of the Corporation Allotments and Small Holdings Committee, stated that he estimated the number of allotments to be something like 20,000.

The Corporation Housing Extensions and Town Planning Committee, in selecting sites for the 5,000 houses embraced in their scheme, were fortunately able to avoid serious disturbance of allotment holders, but in a few other instances it was found necessary to regain possession of the land for the purpose from which it had been temporarily diverted, and with much reluctance the cultivators had to be evicted.

The initial difficulty having been removed by the action of the Board of Agriculture, the local Allotments and Small Holdings Committee took very successful action to meet the popular demand, and thus contributed in no small measure to the very great success which attended the movement in this city. A part of the municipal area is rural in character, and at the end of 1919 there were in addition to the figures given above 48 small holdings, amounting in all to 119a. 1r. 0p. The Board of Agriculture also took steps to bring large areas previously laid down to grass into use for the production of wheat or other crops, and regular meetings were held in Bristol of the Farmers' War Committee, charged with promoting increased food production in districts adjacent to the city.



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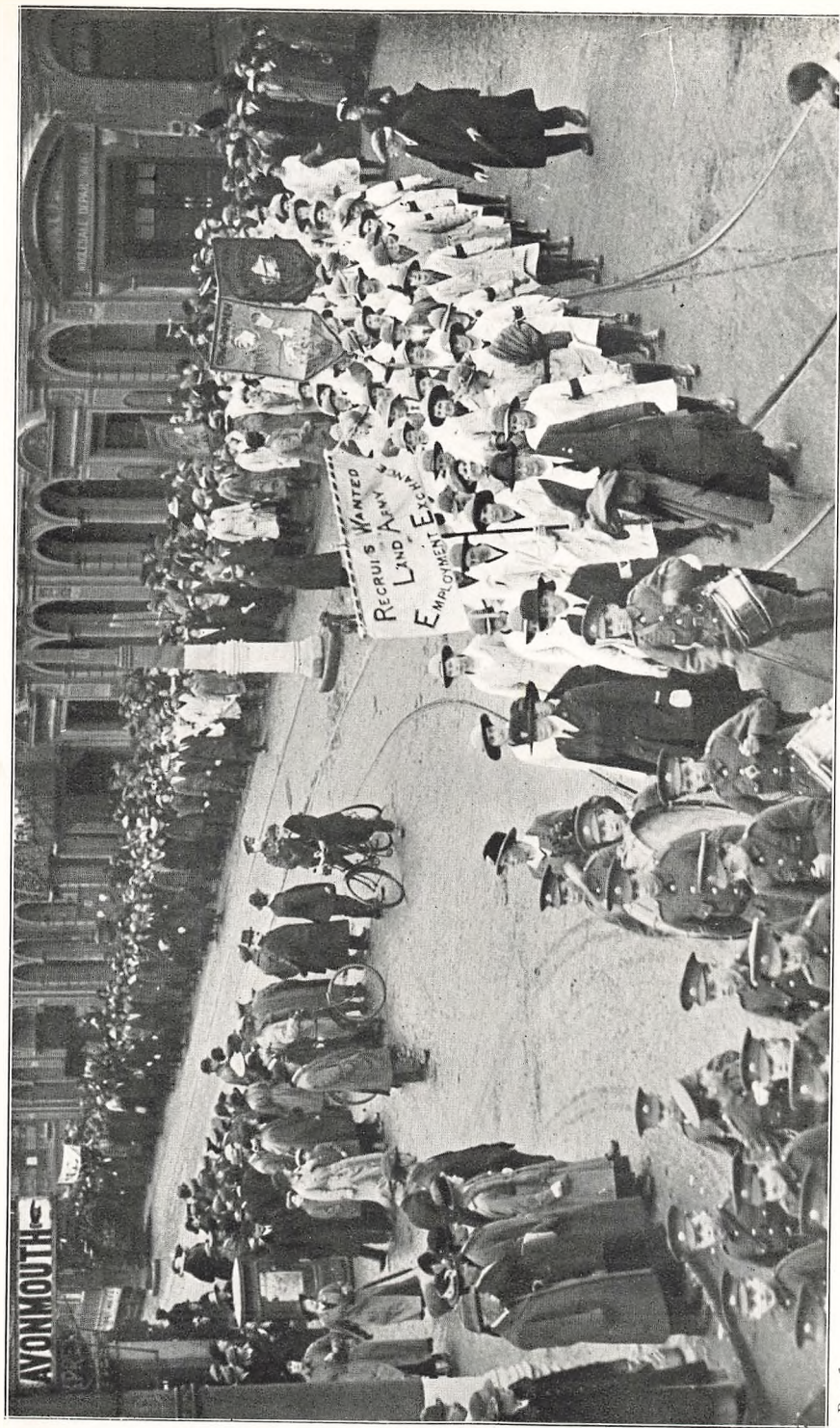
### WOMEN LAND-WORKERS.

Bristol has been a centre from which a large number of women land-workers have been drawn. Since the winter of 1915-16 local village workers have been enrolled by village registrars under the County Committees. Bristol women have, indeed, been pioneers in every branch of land work, whether bracken cutters for the Army in 1916, hay-balers, farm and field workers, gardeners or motor tractor drivers. During 1916, a year before the call for the Women's Land Army, scholarships were given to Bristol girls at Sparsholt Farm Institute, and Bristol also supplied some of the first trainers to the Gloucester County Council Training Farm at Barton End, to the Wilts Farm Schools at Shaw and Manningford, and to Seale-Hayne College in Devon. These pioneers helped to prepare the way for the formation of the Land Army in April, 1917, and from then until June, 1919, a steady flow of recruits from Bristol was trained in and for the adjoining counties. One of the best training centres in the West was that carried on by Mrs. Bonville Fox at Brislington. The garden students trained in 1917 at the University Research Station, Long Ashton, were almost entirely local girls.

During the summer of 1918 a considerable number of Land Army women were employed in the market gardens in and around Bristol, and some of these are still at work. Women have staffed the gardens and dairies of several estates and institutions round Bristol. At Tyntesfield from 1917 to 1919 about eighteen women were employed on the farm, in the gardens and in tree-planting; other groups were employed at Abbots Leigh, Kingsweston, Brislington House, Leigh Court, and Stoke Park. Many Bristol recruits did splendid work in various parts. Several girls made successful motor tractor drivers, and two distinguished themselves in this way; one was awarded an open County Championship Flag, and both ploughed record numbers of acres with a minimum of petrol.

Recruiting was done almost entirely through the Employment Exchange, where weekly Selection Committees were held under the chairmanship of Mrs. Hiatt Baker. A recruiting car came down from London on one occasion, and open-air appeals were made in the city and at the Carnival in the Zoological Gardens.





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WOMEN'S LAND ARMY. PROCESSION THROUGH BRISTOL, FEBRUARY 7TH, 1918.







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In February, 1918, a rally of land-workers was held in Bristol. About 500 women from the district marched to the Colston Hall, where a meeting to urge increased food production was held under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor (Alderman Frank Sheppard). Badges were distributed by the Hon. Mrs. A. Lyttelton, D.B.E. There was a large attendance of farmers. In January, 1919, a presentation of Good Service Ribbons to Land Army girls was made at the Museum Lecture Theatre by the Duchess of Beaufort and the Lady Hylton. The chair was taken by the Lord Mayor (Alderman H. W. Twiggs), and several leading employers testified to the good work done by the women. Addresses were given by Miss Kindersley (Board of Agriculture) and Miss Deane, O.B.E., Ministry of Labour.

### NATIONAL KITCHENS.

Quite early in the war proposals were discussed for establishing national kitchens at meetings of the War Savings Committee, but enquiries in various parts of the city led to the conclusion that they were not wanted, and particularly were the poor found to be indifferent to the idea. Ultimately a private venture was made in the neighbourhood of the Ropewalk, where cooked meals could be purchased and taken home or consumed on the premises. Gradually this kitchen gained favour, the poor taking home food, and persons who were better off came to prefer it to the ordinary restaurants, where in the time of strictest rationing it was hard to get a satisfactory meal at a low price. This kitchen supplied good and well-cooked food cheap. Eventually the Corporation were moved to take over this enterprise from the body of social workers who had been running it, and in 1919, in response to a demand from Clifton, a kitchen was opened in that suburb and has proved a great boon. The Minister of Food formally opened it on May 21st. Upon the establishment of South-Western Regional Headquarters at Clifton for the Ministry of Pensions it was arranged to supply the staff of 400 with food from this kitchen.

### WAR SAVINGS WORK.

Among the many voluntary local organisations during the war the War Savings movement is worthy of honourable mention. Designed to enable "the man in the street" to help to finance



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the war, it fully achieved its object. In the drafting of the National Scheme, which had to safeguard the investor on the one hand and the Treasury on the other, and yet be simple to work, the Bristol Committee gave valuable assistance. While it is the fact that the inaugural work of addressing meetings, organising associations, instructing secretaries and treasurers was exceedingly well done, no words are too strong with which to praise the zeal of the secretaries and treasurers of the associations. On all hands clerical staffs were depleted down to and even beyond danger point, overtime and scanty holidays were the rule, and the ordinary routine was complicated by war-time conditions; yet the additional burden was cheerfully shouldered and conscientiously carried. It would be invidious to mention a few names when with hardly an exception all did so well.

The associations fell into three classes: (1) The Works Associations; (2) the Parish Associations, including social societies; and (3) the Schools Groups of fellow-workers were formed. Each member paid a weekly sum to the association official, who bought certificates and held them till the member had completed payment of 15s. 6d., when he received a certificate in exchange for his coupon card. Employers rendered valuable assistance by purchasing blocks of certificates to be taken up by members over a period, thus giving their employees the benefit of earlier maturity. A few results may be given as typical. The associations connected with the W. D. & H. O. Wills branch of the Imperial Tobacco Company raised £38,000; the Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company £19,000. The parish associations had a wider field, and the work of the officers was consequently harder and more continuous, yet they were equally successful. The totals achieved by Stapleton (£10,500) and Bishopston (£9,000) are among the chief. Perhaps the most enthusiastic associations were to be found in the schools. Though necessarily limited in scope and amount of contributions, they all made very substantial totals. Fairfield School, for example, reached £4,400. In all 210 associations were formed in these three classes.

Later in the movement accredited agents were appointed, and many shopkeepers and licensed victuallers bought blank certificates and re-sold them to customers, thus affording



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opportunity to those not covered by the other organisations. And there was always, of course, the Post Office ready to sell certificates one at a time or by the thousand. Over £3,000,000 has been raised, a wonderful total from weekly sixpences, shillings and half-crowns.

The War Savings organisation having proved its worth, was made use of by the Government in their Food Economy campaign and Waste Paper scheme, and later in the War Loan campaigns. For the last a special committee was formed, consisting of the officers of bankers, stockbrokers, captains of industry, and the local Press. This committee's work was to encourage subscriptions to the War Loans, and the continuous borrowing policy through War Bonds, and to organise the several intensive campaigns. Of the first War Loan campaign no details are available, but the Lord Mayor, Dr. Barclay J. Baron, showed such energy and enthusiasm with such good effect that the honour of knighthood was conferred upon him in recognition of this special service. Besides the total subscribed to War Loans, considerable amounts were sent to London direct for which Bristol may claim credit, though the amount does not appear in our totals. It is known that these in the aggregate run into the third million. The total local subscriptions to War Bonds was over £14,000,000, and to the Victory Loan £4,913,000.

Special weeks were a feature of the work, and in preparation for these a great amount of time and energy was given. The Bristol newspapers devoted much space to these efforts, and to them the success achieved is largely due. In December, 1917, at a few days' notice, a tank was sent to Bristol, and a Tank Week was held from the 17th to the 23rd. These were early days in what was called the Tank Campaign. Despite all handicaps, Bristol was thoroughly aroused, and a total of £1,407,581 was raised—one of the best at the time. Four Jubilee five-pound pieces were taken from their long resting-place and paid over in purchase of bonds. Then followed, March 4th–9th, 1918, the Business Men's Week. For this a canvass of the trades was made, the Lord Mayor (Alderman Frank Sheppard) and Sheriff (Mr. Percy Steadman) leading an influential canvassing committee. The week's total was £2,635,230. Finally, for the Victory Loan—June 30th–July 4th, 1919—£4,913,000 was subscribed. The Bristol Rotary



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Club twice rendered valuable assistance. In the Business Men's Week they opened a bank for the sale of War Savings Certificates and £5 Bonds, thus augmenting the total by £37,000; and again during the run of the Victory Loan, by similar methods with the addition of a travelling bank, £317,000 was secured.

In December, 1919, a tank was presented to the city by the Government in recognition of Bristol's successful effort to promote subscriptions to War Loans, and it was placed on Durdham Down at the corner of Blackboy Hill and Upper Belgrave Road. It carries a plate with a suitable inscription.

The War Savings movement, which has done so much to promote thrift, has now taken form suited to a time of peace, thus affording all classes of the people an opportunity to continue investment in a Government security. The word "war" has, of course, been dropped from the official title, and it is now a "National Savings" organisation, which is directing and stimulating this successful method of mutual help for the State and the individual. Up to the end of the last financial year 400,000,000 of these Savings Certificates had been sold throughout the country, and they represent a total value of £310,000,000. The withdrawals barely reached £38,000,000, and a fair proportion of them were for the purpose of investing in other forms of Government issues. Since the Armistice over 140,000,000 Certificates have been sold.

### HOUSING OF THE PEOPLE.

The housing question had become a serious one just before the war started. Circumstances had tended to check the enterprise of speculative builders, and the erection of new dwellings had practically ceased. One reason for this was that a period of over-building had caused a slump in house property and many owners suffered financially as a consequence. A decreased birth-rate, the emigration of large numbers to Canada by a new steamship service from Avonmouth, and the closing of several Bristol collieries had combined to check the normal increase in the population, and the effects were revealed in the unexpectedly low total given of the census of 1911. The Finance Act of 1909 was also regarded by many persons as an influence restricting private enterprise in the erection of new



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dwellings. However that may be, the fact is unquestioned that before the war commenced in a number of industrial districts there was a scarcity of houses, and the need was particularly great at Avonmouth and Shirehampton, where an increasing number of men were finding employment at the docks and the neighbouring industries. The City Council considered a proposal under which several hundred dwellings would have been erected, but some of the members were adverse to the Corporation embarking on this branch of municipal trading, and the difficulty of planning a scheme under which the economic rent would meet all obligations constituted a still more serious obstacle. The report was therefore sent back by the Council for reconsideration. Meanwhile hopes were raised by the action of the trustees of the late Mr. Sutton, who had left large sums of money for housing schemes in important centres of population where the need was acute. Bristol was selected as one of the places in which the provisions of the will were to be enforced, and it was understood that about £50,000 would be available for local enterprise. Land was secured at Brislington, but the outbreak of war stopped further procedure.

In 1914 complaints were heard of overcrowding in certain districts, and although the calling up of tens of thousands of men of military age and the closing down of many homes would have slightly eased the situation, the influx of war workers from other parts of the country out-balanced this relief and rendered the problem more acute. There were also a considerable number of new residents who came from parts of the country that were exposed to raids from enemy aircraft. These conditions caused such a demand for dwellings that rents were influenced in an upward direction. Many landlords were quick to take advantage of this position. Notices were served on the tenants all over the country for increased rents. A stormy agitation arose. Public meetings were held, and indignant resolutions were passed and sent on to the Government asking for legislation to deal with this objectionable form of profiteering. The Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restriction) Act was passed, which made it illegal to raise the rents of small houses, and restricted the power of eviction till a period after the war, which period was to be subsequently fixed



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by Parliament. The Act was afterwards extended. Although some measure of this character was unquestionably necessary, it proved a two-edged sword. Rents remained low when everything else commanded high prices, with the result that the cost of repairs became almost prohibitory, and it was stated (in 1919) by the Chairman of the Bristol Housing and Town Planning Committee that many dwellings had been allowed to get into a ruinous condition as a consequence.

The National Housing and Town Planning Council helped to concentrate public attention on the subject by holding conferences in various parts of the country at which structural and financial aspects of housing schemes were carefully considered. Bristol became the meeting-place for the representatives of municipal and rural authorities throughout the Western Counties, and several largely-attended conferences were held in the City Council Chamber. These gatherings and similar meetings elsewhere helped in the working out of the difficult problem of State assistance to localities. A new spirit had arisen which swept away some of the narrow views that formerly hindered progress. The housing question during the war commanded far more attention than was ever given to it in peace time. That the health of the people was being undermined by bad housing was shown in an alarming manner by the high percentage of low-grade men for the Army. By the winter of 1917-18 an A1 man before the Local Tribunals was indeed rare. "Never again!" was the Premier's watchword of the war. "Never again," said the same statesman, must it be permitted to perpetuate this overcrowding. Homes fit for heroes to live in must be made if our race were to recover from the terrible loss sustained by the slaughter of the pick of our youth.

A start has been made in Bristol to provide improved dwellings. At Shirehampton 150 houses have been built on Garden City lines. The whole plan is arranged for a scheme of 2,000 homes with modern conveniences, not more than ten houses to the acre, and so arranged that the amenities associated with Garden Cities shall be secured—spaces for cricket, football, lawn tennis, bowls, playgrounds for children, gardens back and front for each cottage. A hall is to be built containing a gymnasium and other opportunities for physical culture.



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The social side is to be catered for by concerts and other entertainments; the educational by lectures, public meetings, debates; in short, the intention is to promote as far as is reasonably possible all that stands for the moral, intellectual, and physical development of the people. It is hoped that in connection with these 2,000 homes that the Utility Society, which was formed in 1917—the Board of Management made up of representatives of Employers' and Workmen's Organisations—will become responsible for developing this Garden Suburb, and further that the tenants will become shareholders, and so share in the responsibility of maintaining the character of the suburb, assisting in all the agencies which are calculated to bring about the well-being of the community. Whether this movement will fructify time alone can prove. All that is required is fellowship, good will and a spirit of service, prompted by a determination to wipe out the ugliness of the slums, to avoid the monotony of the long terraced houses that abut on pavements, and by this means help to make our city sweet, wholesome and fair, fit places for men and women to live and work, where the children may grow up healthy in body, pure in spirit. This opportunity to "make good" we owe to the men who have fought, and in many cases have given their lives, so that England shall remain free.

A much larger scheme of housing was initiated by the Corporation of Bristol under the direction and encouragement of the Government, who have undertaken to give large pecuniary assistance to approved housing schemes in all parts of the country. Sites have been purchased in the suburbs of the city, and it is proposed to erect 5,000 houses on the Garden City system in the course of the next few years. The first tenders received were disappointingly high, suggesting that instead of a total outlay of say £3,000,000, there would be one of £5,000,000 or £6,000,000. Specifications were revised and the cost somewhat reduced on the few blocks of dwellings forming the subject of the first contracts. Owing, however, to unsettled labour conditions and difficulties with regard to the supply of materials, many builders hesitated to take the responsibility of tendering. The City Council in November, 1919, decided to put in hand a number of houses without engaging a contractor, the work being done by men employed



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by the Sanitary Committee. It was then contemplated that other houses would be erected by contractors working under an agreement which secured to them a small percentage of profit on the cost and also on their plant used in the work. It is unsafe to predict what will be the outcome of the proposals. The war exacted heavy toll of operatives in the building trade, and those engaged in great housing schemes are faced with the initial difficulty that many more skilled men are required than are to be found in Great Britain. The raising of the huge capital sums required forms another serious aspect of the problem. Here also the future must be left to other historians, but at the close of 1919 hope was centred on a system of local bonds, for amounts of £5 and multiples, repayable at par and bearing an interest of 6 per cent. The arrangement with the Government is that the annual loss to the local authorities for the first seven years, because of the impossibility of getting an economic rent, shall not exceed the product of a penny rate. In Bristol a penny in the £ produces about £7,500. But local authorities are required to do their best to get as near to an economic rent as possible, if not immediately, then in the course of the seven years. The extraordinarily high cost of building raised the question what would happen at the end of the seven years if an economic rent could not be obtained and the aggregate loss to the Corporation exceeded the amount of a penny rate. This point was placed before the Ministry of Health by the Bristol Housing Committee and the reply contained the following :—

“The Local Authority are required under the Housing (Assisted Scheme) Regulations, 1919, at the conclusion of the financial year, ending 31st March, 1927, to submit to the Minister a revised estimate of their average annual income and expenditure for the purposes of the Assisted Housing Scheme for the ensuing financial year. The amount of Exchequer subsidy from that date will be determined by the Minister on the basis of the average annual deficit to be incurred by the Local Authority under the assisted scheme, as shown by such revised estimate, and will be equivalent to the amount of such average annual deficit, subject to the deduction therefrom of the estimated annual produce of the rate of 1d. in the £ levied in the area chargeable with the expenses of the assisted scheme.”









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ALDERMAN FRANK SHEPPARD, O.B.E., J.P.  
(*Lord Mayor 1917-18*).



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The communication, however, went on to explain that on arriving at the amount of the subsidy the Ministry may make deductions for expenditure that is considered excessive or not properly chargeable, deficiency due to insufficient rent being collected, and several other circumstances that might considerably affect the balance sheet. It is obvious that cases may arise when disagreement between the Local Authority and the Ministry of Health results from the enforcement of these conditions. In such event the settlement is to be by arbitration.

### JOINT INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS.

The formation of the Bristol Reconstruction Association and the meetings which followed helped to arouse interest in and extend information with regard to serious social, industrial and international problems, which it was recognised must be faced if the dreams of a better world were to have any actuality. The Association held many meetings, which were addressed by experts on special branches of this far-reaching subject, and it was recognised that the city was taking a pioneer part in its action. The holding of industrial conferences at Penscot, a rest house in the Mendips, was also a helpful factor. At this period a strong desire was shown to develop the Whitley system of industrial committees, to get rid of the old suspicions which had too often marked the attitude of labour towards the capitalist, and to ensure for the workers better conditions than had been customary in the past. Speeches on reconstruction subjects of this nature were very numerous, and no one pleaded more eloquently for the new spirit of co-operation than the Lord Mayor in 1918, Alderman Frank Sheppard. In the pottery industry and in the boot trade practical results have already followed, and are giving a more hopeful outlook to both of these industries. It is pleasing to record the fact that in both instances Bristol men were among the prime movers in the advance that was made.

The reference to Penscot demands some little explanation. At Shipham, a hamlet in the Mendips, not far from Winscombe, a long low building faces the village green. It was once an inn, but afterwards became the Guest House of the Adult School Union and the Workers' Educational Association. Both



## BRISTOL AND THE GREAT WAR

these organisations possess a considerable membership in Bristol. Struck by the growing feeling that every possible attempt should be made to give permanence to the better understanding that had grown up during the war among many employers and trade union officials, Mr. E. H. C. Wethered, a Bristol barrister keenly interested in social problems, considered means by which this better understanding could be made permanent. Mr. Wethered was Chairman of the Bristol Association for Industrial Reconstruction and also Chairman of Penscot Ltd. There were other Bristolians moved by the same impulse. In the summer of 1916 Mr. Wethered personally approached a number of trade union leaders in Bristol to ascertain if they would welcome an opportunity for an informal conference with Mr. Arnold Rowntree and himself. The suggestion was warmly received, and finally it was decided to hold the gathering at Penscot. There those who attended had a very free and earnest discussion on the industrial situation. It was suggested that much good would result if they had a joint meeting of leading employers and leading trade unionists. A number of gentlemen representing both groups were invited, and the proposal met with a hearty response. That joint conference took place on the 16th and 17th of February, 1917. It was fully understood that those who attended did so not in a representative capacity, but as the guests of Mr. Arnold Rowntree and Mr. Wethered. The proceedings at the second conference produced a frank discussion, conducted all through in a splendid spirit, each one present exhibiting an earnest desire to appreciate the point of view of the others. An important report which had a large circulation over England, and to some extent in America, was one of the results of the conference. It recognised that the first essential step to establish better relations in an industry was to associate the operatives in some measure with the control of industry in which they passed their lives, and secondly it was suggested as a basis of an industrial policy that a Joint Council should be established in each industry, with representatives of employers and employed, and that the Joint Council should be based on the existing organisations on which the industrial life of the country has been already organised for the purposes of industrial control, viz. the employers'



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federations and the operatives' unions. It was proposed that there should be a national council and district councils to render effective local agreements and decisions arrived at by the national body. The broad idea underlying the suggestion was to systematise the present method of adjusting industrial questions by a process of collective bargaining, providing the standing machinery for continuous negotiations, with the object not so much of settling as avoiding disputes. These suggestions were on the same lines as those subsequently made by the Sub-Committee on Reconstruction, the Chairman of which was the Right Hon. J. H. Whitley. Further conferences took up distinctive branches of the industrial subject, and the Penscot reports must be numbered among the chief local educative influences of the war period.

The position of women in industry after the war was the subject of one of the Penscot conferences, the report of which reached the public during 1918. The conference laid it down as a fundamental factor that "the position of woman as an industrial worker is and always must be of secondary importance to her position in the home. To provide the conditions which render a strong and healthy family life possible to all is the first interest of the State, since the family is the foundation stone of the social system." Another fundamental decision was that "while women have helped and are helping the nation splendidly, they must realise that men have not forfeited their jobs by answering their country's call, and doing work which women cannot undertake." Granted these two points, it was realised by the conference that the abnormal influence of the past few years would permanently influence the outlook of many women, and it could not be expected that after the war there would be an automatic return to old conditions. Careful calculations led the conference to believe that the return of the men to their proper places in our industrial and commercial life would create the need of "providing fresh occupation for the greater part of 1,426,000 women and girls." This number represented the total number of women and girls who had "entered industry" between the outbreak of war and October, 1917. It was computed that 400,000 of them had been drawn from domestic service. There would be many openings for them in pre-war occupations, but the conference held that "if



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women are to be persuaded to enter these occupations in large numbers the wages, hours and conditions of work will require very considerable amendment. In particular, the conditions of domestic service will have to be greatly improved, especially on the side of allowing a much greater amount of freedom to those engaged therein."



## Chapter XII

### Phases and Events : A Diary







## CHAPTER XII

### PHASES AND EVENTS : A DIARY

THE story of Bristol's war-time experience would not be complete without an account of the many phases and incidents which could not be conveniently dealt with in the earlier pages of this volume.

In Bristol, as in other parts of the country, the events which followed the tragedy of Sarajevo produced anxiety ; but very few people had any conception of German designs, and widespread hope existed that a world-war would be averted. On the part of Bristolians there was a striking absence of the Jingo spirit ; the universal desire was for a peaceful outcome. Bristol was enjoying a period of prosperity. The trade of the port was developing in a most satisfactory fashion ; representatives of the city had been engaged on a commercial mission in Overseas Dominions with the desire to strengthen the links with other parts of the Empire. Large expenditure was contemplated for the purpose of improving the equipment of the City Docks, while at Avonmouth increased accommodation was being provided for the rapidly-growing trade in petroleum, and a huge Cold Store was about to be erected in proximity to the Royal Edward Dock. The Corporation had under consideration the shortage of houses and the means of solving the problem on the lines of an economic rent, and the Trustees of the late Mr. Sutton were preparing to build a number of dwellings at Brislington. This was in fulfilment of the terms of a bequest under which Bristol was to receive about £50,000 to be expended on housing.

These were not the only schemes in hand when the war cloud burst. Then all other considerations were overshadowed by the realisation that the country had entered upon the greatest conflict known in its long history.



1914.

The earliest effects in Bristol of the Declaration of War were seen in the recall of Territorials from their annual camps and their mobilisation as part of the fighting forces.

The 4th and 6th Gloucesters before leaving deposited their colours with the Lord Mayor, the ceremony taking place at the Council House on August 8th.

On August 7th the Government made their first attempt to control prices by issuing a schedule of maximum retail charges. The list was as follows: granulated sugar, 4d.; lump sugar, 5d.; butter, 1s. 6d.; colonial cheese 9½d.; American lard, 8d.; margarine, 10d.; continental bacon, 1s. 4d. (by the side), and home produced bacon, 1s. 6d. (by the side). All these prices were per pound and in the light of subsequent events it is interesting to note that the tendency for a time was downwards. The prices in December, 1919, twelve months after the signing of the Armistice, were: granulated sugar, 8d.; lump sugar, 8¾d.; butter, 2s. 6d.; cheese, 1s. 6d. (directly afterwards raised to 1s. 8d.); lard, 2s.; margarine, 1s. and 1s. 2d.; bacon (English and imported), 1s. 4d. to 2s. 6d., according to cuts.

In a few days all signs of the original panic through fear of food shortage had subsided.

At a much later period Food Control was established, and the work done in Bristol has already been described. The long queues which subsequently formed at food stores all over the country prior to rationing had their effect in bringing into being local Food Control Committees.

In Bristol, as elsewhere, the phrase, "Business as usual," was current, and while in the long run it was evident that the advice could not be followed literally when conditions became entirely changed from any within living memory, the attempt to carry on tended to lessen the dislocation of business and check consequent unemployment.

There was only one German vessel in the port when war was declared, the sailing ship *Elfrida*. She was seized and her crew placed under detention, but her officers, being over military age, were allowed to return to their own country. For a considerable time after the commencement of hostilities



there were vague rumours of spying, and many were the demands that all enemy aliens should be interned, and in October numbers of Germans resident in Bristol who had not been naturalised were sent to internment camps.

The war caused an enormous increase in traffic on the railways and excursion trains were stopped. This act speedily settled the fate of an International Exhibition then in the meadows between Bower Ashton and the River Avon. There stood a number of large temporary buildings, some ornate in character and one designed to suggest Bristol Castle. The Exhibition was popularly known as "The White City," and became vacant after the close of the Exhibition on August 15th. Subsequently the War Office took possession of the site and structures for military purposes.

Among the early proposals of the war period was one for the formation of a Civic Guard. It was announced on August 16th that the Military Authorities disapproved of the movement, which it was feared would check recruiting for the Regular Army.

The Bristol Board of Guardians had long been engaged upon a solution for the problem of properly housing and classifying the many poor people in their charge. An extension of the municipal area in 1904 had brought into their possession a small workhouse standing in a large area of ground at Southmead. Upon this site the Guardians built a large new infirmary, which cost about £50,000, and was designed to accommodate 550 sick and invalided poor. The building was complete but not yet occupied, and the Guardians, on August 21st, offered it to the War Office for the treatment of wounded soldiers. In that capacity it became the scene of a great work, and one which evoked warm admiration from Dr. Valintine, Inspector-General of Hospitals and Chief Health Officer for New Zealand. That gentleman visited the Bristol institutions on October 9th with Sir Thomas Mackenzie.

Quite early in the war period trained nurses were dispatched from the Royal Infirmary for service at the Front. This prompt aid was cordially recognised on September 3rd in a letter from Queen Alexandra, addressed to Sir George White, Bart., then the President of the institution.



The question whether football and cricket programmes should be abandoned gave rise to controversy in the autumn of 1914. Rugby matches were cancelled, but Association fixtures were carried through. This aroused adverse comment, and ultimately there was a general stoppage of county cricket and of important football matches. A certain amount of local play in these and other games continued throughout the war, much of it for the benefit of soldiers.

The belief that serious unemployment would have to be faced led to special schemes for providing work being considered by the Corporation. With the same object in view the restoration of St. Stephen's Church tower was proceeded with at a cost of several thousands of pounds.

On October 8th the first body of Canadian troops arrived in Bristol. They were part of a large contingent (30,000 in all), the main portion of which disembarked at Plymouth and completed training in this country.

Conditions at some of the military camps became very trying as winter approached, and the War Office decided to billet a considerable number of troops in towns. Some thousands of Scottish soldiers, forming part of Kitchener's Army, were accordingly sent to Bristol. The Colston Hall, the Victoria Rooms, the Coliseum Hall in Park Row, and other buildings were requisitioned for military purposes. In consequence of the presence in Bristol of these forces the Licensing Justices decided that no alcoholic liquor should be sold after 9 p.m. The presence of these soldiers produced other results. Congregations meeting at various places of worship realised that they could perform useful work, and accordingly church schoolrooms and lecture halls were transformed into soldiers' institutes, and games and facilities for reading and writing were provided. The personal interest displayed by those connected with these social centres was further shown by much hospitality in the homes.

The customary municipal election did not take place on November 1st, war legislation having given sitting members the right to retain their seats. Casual vacancies were filled by the Council co-opting new members, selected so that the views held by the former representative might as nearly as possible be preserved. This co-optation continued during



the war, and about a dozen members were so brought into the Council Chamber.

The Colston Anniversary in 1914 was observed under unusual conditions. Owing to the party truce due to the war, it was arranged that the speeches should be patriotic rather than political. The military use of the Colston Hall and the Victoria Rooms forced the Anchor and Dolphin Societies to modify their celebrations and to hold only private committee dinners instead of the usual public gatherings, and the speeches were non-party. This modification continued through the whole of the war, and the former custom has not yet been resumed. Yet the collections for charitable purposes have increased.

The announcement of the death of Earl Roberts (on Nov. 14th) occasioned much regret in Bristol. He had special ties with this city. In his boyhood he lived here, his father being resident in Clifton. In later years Lord Roberts was often in Bristol, and in 1893 was presented with the honorary freedom. At the hour of his burial in St. Paul's Cathedral a memorial service was held in Bristol Cathedral.

Among the many appeals made on behalf of our Forces was one initiated by the Ladies' Emergency Committee of the Bristol Branch of the Navy League. They devised a scheme for collecting and sending chocolate to those serving. On December 5th the citizens had a special opportunity of supporting this proposal, and contributed between four and five tons of chocolate.

A dramatic coincidence marked the concert of the New Philharmonic Society on December 9th. Just as the choir was about to sing Newbolt's stirring "Songs of the Fleet" the news was received and announced in the hall of the great British naval victory off the Falkland Islands.

A more anxious period than the latter part of 1914 it would be scarcely possible to conceive. The position of the Allied Armies in the Western arena became extremely critical, French and British forces being swept back by the overwhelming advance of German troops. The citizens bore the strain with wonderful calmness. There was not the slightest panic, but a quiet conviction that time would bring a turn in the tide. Evidence of the vast scale of operations was afforded by the



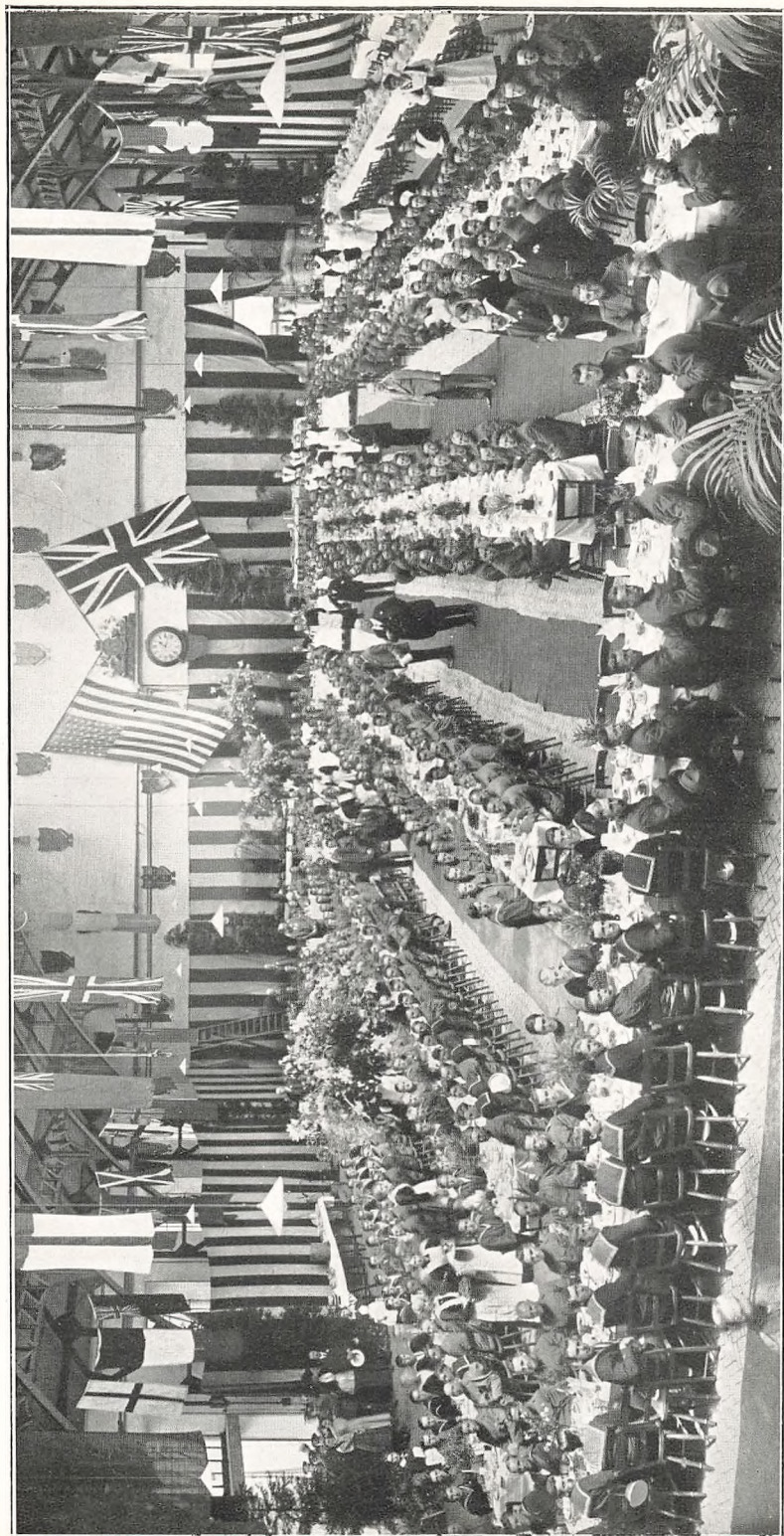
daily scenes in the streets. Long processions of motor lorries passed through the city and over Durdham Down on their way to Avonmouth for embarkation. Enormous quantities of stores were thus dispatched. Great guns, drawn by powerful caterpillars, rumbled through the public thoroughfares, and adjoining buildings vibrated with the weight of this unprecedentedly heavy traffic. Day after day one could stand at the window of an office overlooking the main route and watch the interminable lines of war vehicles. Motor cars fitted as ambulances went by in hundreds, and even more numerous at a later stage were the London omnibuses sent out to assist in the quick movement of our soldiers in France. Many were the street scenes that an historian would gladly see recorded pictorially ; but one of the difficulties in compiling such a chronicle as this lies in the fact that a contemporary record of military movements and preparations was quite properly forbidden by the authorities, and the use of the camera was most strictly prohibited. Of the many interesting sights witnessed at Avonmouth when its docks were being worked at highest pressure on behalf of the Allied cause, as far as is known, not a single photograph exists.

## 1915.

The diminution of adult crime was one of the pleasing characteristics of the war period. At the New Year's meeting of the Bristol City Council in 1915 reference was made to the fact that 300 fewer men and women had been brought before the Magistrates in 1914, while, in spite of the growth of the city's population, the number of cases was less than it was forty years before. A few days later the Recorder, Dr. Blake Odgers, in charging the Grand Jury at Quarter Sessions, alluded to the diminution of crime in Bristol and in the country generally. Later in the period, while the comparative immunity from serious crime by adults continued, the number of juvenile offenders increased considerably, one cause being the absence of paternal control.

Bristol happily was never attacked by enemy aircraft. It was recognised, however, that raids of this character were not impracticable, and their possibility had to be seriously





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AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY, JULY 4TH, 1918. ENTERTAINMENT OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND SAILORS  
AT DRILL HALL, OLD MARKET STREET.







considered. As far as anti-aircraft defences were concerned it was stated that Bristol was an unprotected city, and that absolute darkness would be the best safeguard. A scheme was accordingly evolved under which a system of telephonic warnings was introduced, the Bristol police being in this way kept informed of raiders' movements long before the West of England could be reached. To prevent the ruddy glow caused by the lighting of a great city, which can be seen at a considerable distance, many street lamps were left unlighted, and others were so obscured by blue paint that scarcely any rays could penetrate the coating of pigment. It was understood that directly a warning justified local action the electrical supply would be switched off at the generating station, and in the case of gas arrangements were made with the Boy Scouts, who on receipt of notice were prepared to extinguish all the street gas lamps. As may be imagined, on dark nights city streets presented a gloomy appearance; in some the darkness was profound, and there were many complaints that the actual dangers arising from the absence of light outweighed the risk from enemy raiders. Apparently this point of view was taken by the Military Authorities, for on April, 16th, 1915, the Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Command cancelled the lighting restrictions. The Sanitary Committee, however, from motives of economy declined to take advantage of this order, and reduced lighting remained in force. Afterwards the Home Office issued a stringent code of regulations, restricting public lighting and also regulating the use of lights on vehicles, and these provisions were drastically carried out in Bristol.

The excessive rainfall at the end of 1914 and the beginning of 1915 produced an impression on some minds that the gunfire on the Continent of Europe was the cause of this excess of moisture. British meteorological authorities did not accept the theory. The rainfall in December, 1914, in Bristol was 7.17 inches, but the totals for December in the pre-war years 1911 and 1912 were very little short of that amount.

The cold weather of January was felt more severely because of the shortage of coal. Some of the Bristol elementary schools were closed owing to inability to procure fuel. The war soon added to transport difficulties, a large number of horses being commandeered for military work.



Count Goblet d'Alviella, Belgian Minister and Vice-President of the Belgian Senate, visited Bristol on February 10th, and while here spoke highly of the city's hospitality to Belgians who had been driven from their homes.

The Bristol Juvenile Advisory Committee reported in February that one result of the war had been the creation of an extraordinary demand for boy labour. With certain exceptions girls were also in demand. Many children were said to be working twelve hours a day.

At a meeting of the Bristol Vigilance Society in February reference was made to the way in which young girls lost their heads, and forced their attentions upon soldiers in the streets and parks. Women police patrols in Bristol had, it was stated, done useful work. About this time there were reports current with regard to the expected advent of many "war babies," but these reports proved to be gross exaggerations. The return of the Registrar-General issued subsequently showed a considerable decline in the number of illegitimate births for the whole country.

Bristol Education Committee in the early part of 1915 were called upon to consider and make arrangements for lending nine Council Schools to the War Office for use as hospitals for wounded soldiers. This would have displaced 10,000 scholars, and it was proposed to carry on the educational work by using other schools in double shifts. About 20,000 children would thus have become half-timers. The plan was never put in force; the War Department made other arrangements.

The scarcity of labour and the continued demand for recruits and also for operatives in factories producing war materials led to local authorities being circularised by the Local Government Board in March, 1915, and the suggestion was made that new schemes of municipal work should be delayed, and that where possible those that had been started should be stopped.

At the annual meeting of the Bristol Royal Infirmary on March 23rd reference was made to the use of the new part of the institution as a Military Hospital, and a letter read from the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief recognising the generous and patriotic spirit of the Governors of the Royal Infirmary in placing this superb institution at the disposal



of His Majesty's Forces at this time of a great national crisis.

The impending departure of the Black Watch from Bristol gave rise to a pleasant gathering at Colston Hall, at which the Lord Mayor (Alderman J. Swaish) spoke. This was on April 10th. Soon after, in an appeal, through the Lord Mayor, to the public not to treat his soldiers, the Colonel stated that all but fifty of his battalion had resolved to touch no alcoholic beverages until the war was over. These Scottish soldiers left Bristol on April 21st.

The sinking of the ss. *Lusitania* on May 7th produced a tremendous sensation throughout the world. This magnificent vessel (31,550 tons register) was torpedoed by a German submarine off the Irish coast. It was stated that 1,389 persons, including 100 Americans, lost their lives. Several Bristolians escaped, and one of them who sank with the *Lusitania*, but came to the surface and was rescued, gave a graphic account of the occurrence. Public indignation gave rise to anti-German riots in London and several other centres in the course of the next few days, but there was no disturbance in Bristol.

The proposed new frontage to the University of Bristol and the extension of the Municipal Museum and Art Gallery resulted in the headquarters of the City of Bristol Rifle Corps in Queen's Road being acquired for these two purposes. On June 2nd the new Rifle headquarters in Old Market Street were opened. The Drill Hall was subsequently the scene of a number of pleasant Christmas gatherings, large bodies of wounded soldiers and (much later) a great assembly of returned prisoners of war being entertained there.

The City Council on July 13th sent a message of sympathy with France, which expressed profound admiration of French gallantry in the field.

August 4th, the anniversary of the outbreak of the war, was marked by an Intercession Service at the Cathedral.

On August 10th a new Order by the Central (Liquor Traffic) Control Board came into force in Bristol and district. It referred to intoxicants, and prohibited treating (an exception being made where a person took drink with a meal), and credit; it restricted sale and supply to five and a half hours a day, viz. 12 to 2.30 and 6 to 9 p.m., and with regard to spirits for



consumption off the premises limited the hours during which an applicant could be served to 12 to 2.30 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Licensees were urged to cater for supply of food and non-intoxicating refreshments, and many did so.

The meeting of the Trades Union Congress in Bristol in September was marked by many references to the war. The tone of the Congress was unmistakably in favour of supporting the Coalition Government in the prosecution of the war, but opposed to "the sinister efforts of a reactionary Press" to force conscription on the country. The outstanding feature of the Congress was the unexpected visit of Mr. Lloyd George, then Minister of Munitions. He had noted a passage in the speech of the President (Mr. J. A. Seddon), and telegraphed a reply to it. The Congress thereupon invited him to address them. He accepted, and spoke on September 9th. His speech emphasised the need of a much fuller utilisation of national labour resources, for so far only fifteen per cent. of the machines turning out rifles, cannon, and shells were working on night shifts. He complained of obstruction by trade unionists, and said the position required the relaxation of union rules. His frank speech produced a deep impression, and next day it was announced that the Parliamentary Committee had decided that an immediate investigation should be made. Subsequently reports were presented in answer to the charges, their tenor being to exonerate workpeople from the spirit complained of. Some of the facts were presented in a different form. In December, under the auspices of the Parliamentary Munitions Committee, meetings were held in several of the workshops of the city to stimulate output. At one of these gatherings Sir William Howell Davies, M.P., stated that in visiting many establishments he noted a marked improvement in the tone of reports from employers.

During the sittings of the Congress (on Tuesday, September 7th) the King and Queen came privately to Bristol for the purpose of visiting patients in the military hospitals. In all, at the Base, and at Southmead and Beaufort, their Majesties saw nearly 1,000 men. Shirehampton Remount Depot was also visited.

On September 16th Lord Selborne, the President of the



Board of Agriculture, addressed a meeting of agriculturists on the importance of increasing the home production of food. A month or two later the same subject was again urged on the whole country by the Board. No shortage of food was experienced, and owing to the demand for labour comparatively little was heard about the high prices. No organised action was taken in Bristol to increase food production, and the Government for a considerable period declined to remove the hindrance which stood in the way of a large increase in the number of allotments. In the end the State action with regard to agriculture resulted in the breaking up of much grass land for the growing of wheat and other crops, and in enforcing this obligation upon occupiers the Government had the assistance of committees familiar with the conditions in various districts. The system of control touched the agricultural interest at many points, and it is safe to say that never in Bristol's history were there so many meetings of farmers held in this city as during the war period. Bristol was found to be a convenient rendezvous for agriculturists from the adjacent counties.

An indication was afforded on November 9th of the public determination with regard to the war. The Bristol City Council adopted the following resolution: "That this Council, at its first meeting in the new municipal year, puts upon record its determination to give the Government its whole-hearted support in carrying the war to a successful issue." Mr. W. H. Ayles, a Labour Councillor, alone objected and did not vote. The proceedings were notable for the strong speeches in favour of the resolution from Alderman F. Sheppard, Mr. W. Whitefield, and Mr. A. A. Senington, Labour members. When Alderman Sheppard concluded aldermen and councillors jumped to their feet and cheered with an enthusiasm for which records afforded no precedent.

About a fortnight later a great Labour meeting was held at Colston Hall, under the chairmanship of Alderman Sheppard, to appeal to the Labour Party in Bristol to assist in recruiting. Mr. W. Crooks, M.P., and Mr. J. O'Grady, M.P., spoke. The meeting was an answer to the Bristol Trades Council's resolution deciding to take a neutral position.

A conference held in Bristol in November protested against



increase in the rents of houses. The problem had presented itself in several parts of the country. It was in some cases bound up with the demand for higher rates of interest, numbers of mortgagees giving notice to raise their charge. The Government introduced legislation dealing with both questions.

A meeting on December 2nd listened to speeches on women's war clubs in Bristol. Three such clubs were stated to be at work—the Bedminster Club in Sargent Street, the Beaufort Club in Newfoundland Street, and a club at 118 Hotwell Road. There were at these clubs rooms for reading and writing, and nurseries where children were looked after by voluntary helpers.

A London newspaper describing Christmas shopping stated that while houses depending on expenditure by men found business slack women spent money freely, and establishments catering for them reported record sales. There was evidence that this was true in Bristol.

#### 1916.

On January 2nd, 1916, an Intercession Service was held at the Cathedral ; it was one of many gatherings of this character during the war.

For several months stories were current of an adventure in which the *Nicosian* (a Bristol-bound steamer carrying mules), a German submarine, and a patrol boat called the *Baralong*, were concerned. On January 5th, 1916, the German Government made allegations (forwarded through the American Ambassador) to the effect that the submarine was sunk and her crew "murdered." The charge was launched against the British naval men on the *Baralong*. Sir Edward Grey, while not accepting the story put forward by Germany, offered an inquiry by, say, a body of United States naval officers, provided its scope should include certain other acts in the same forty-eight hours, in regard to which gross illegality was charged against Germany. The torpedoing of the mail steamer *Arabic*, which occurred just before the adventure with the mule boat, was one of these. The United States Government at once declined to allow their naval officers to act,



and no investigation took place. Reports current in Bristol after the arrival of the mule boat at Avonmouth showed that the submarine had been sunk and her crew destroyed under highly sensational circumstances, although the narrative was very different from that told by the German Government. The British Admiralty, however, would not allow details to be published. In February the *Daily Telegraph* gave an American version, the mule boat having in the meantime returned to the United States. According to this, the German submarine attacked the *Nicosian* and the crew of this steamer left her in boats, but the American mule men remained aboard. The Germans fired a torpedo at the *Nicosian* but did not sink her, and then sent aboard a body of men to sink her with bombs. The infuriated mule attendants attacked their foes with iron bars with such determination that the Germans took refuge in cabins, in the shaft tunnel and elsewhere. They were pursued and killed. The captain of the submarine and others had come on board, and were attacked and disposed of in the same way. Meanwhile the patrol boat, the *Baralong*, had quietly come up, her rig giving no indication of her real character until she was close enough to fire at the submarine and sink her.

At a meeting of the Bristol Docks Committee on January 21st it was reported that assistance from members of the Volunteer Training Corps had been offered for dock work. It was explained in reply that the dock position was due to other causes than shortage of labour, and the offer was declined, appreciation being expressed of the public spirit which prompted it.

A report by the Bristol Advisory Committee, working in conjunction with the Employment Exchange, issued early in 1916, threw light on the effect of the war on the labour of young people in the preceding year. It stated that boys were almost generally fired by the ambition to become engineers, while the preference for office work exhibited by girls prevented the utilisation of the services of many in positions where they were needed. The fact that in certain industries boys could obtain from £1 to £2 10s. per week provoked restlessness and a disinclination to take positions where remuneration was smaller. The report added that the good effect of member-

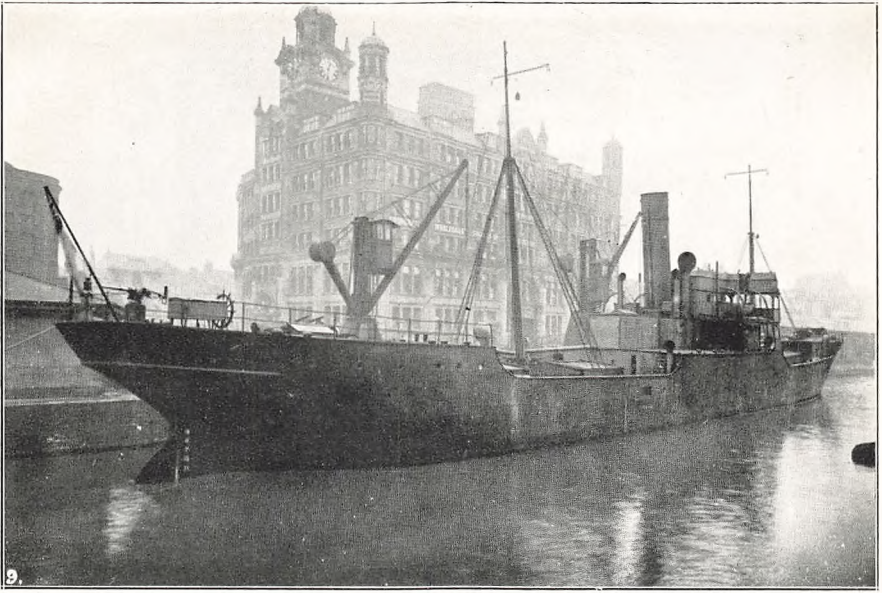


ship of the Boys' Brigade, the Church Lads' Brigade, and the Boy Scouts was very marked, and undoubtedly proved the extreme usefulness of such training and discipline. A number of lads between the ages of fifteen and seventeen entered the Army, having stated their age to be nineteen, but from time to time they were discharged at their parents' request after terms of service varying from three to twelve months. As a rule these lads, on coming out of the Army, showed great improvement in physique, and were easy to deal with and ready to accept a reasonable wage. Boys were taking the places of men in certain occupations, noticeably in warehouses, offices and factories, on various machines, in driving vehicles, at saw mills, and to some extent as dock labourers.

Toward the end of January two Labour Conferences were held in Bristol, at which the war and the workers' attitude toward it gave rise to much discussion. The first was that of the Women's Labour League. The President, Dr. Marion Phillips, referred to Germany's flaming march through Belgium, and said "from that time, passionate pacifists as women might be, there was little to do but bury the dead hopes of neutrality, and, faced with the full horrors of the meaning of militarist Government, throw our utmost strength into preserving our own country from the horrors of lawless military aggression, whether reflected by the enemy without or by the wickedness and weakness of our own hearts from within." A section of the Conference dissented from the President's speech, and one resolution demanded a stoppage of the war.

The Conference of the Labour Party which commenced on January 26th at the Victoria Rooms was regarded as the most momentous gathering in the history of the movement. The Military Service Bill had aroused considerable controversy, and a special meeting of the Trades Union Congress on January 6th declined to allow their Parliamentary representatives a free hand with regard to this measure. Several Labour members of the Government thereupon resigned their ministerial offices. The Labour Conference in Bristol was a sequel. The proceedings were continued for several days, and gave rise to many contests between members of the Independent Labour Party, who were adverse to the Government, and delegates who held an opposite view. The voting on the various





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TWO VIEWS OF H.M.S. "HYDERABAD" (MYSTERY SHIP)  
IN FLOATING HARBOUR, JANUARY, 1919.







resolutions showed majorities upon declarations of principle against war and conscription and also against the Military Service Bill. Notwithstanding this, there was a majority on a card vote of 900,000 in favour of supporting the Government in prosecuting the war and a majority of 1,641,000 for a resolution approving of Labour's co-operation in the recruiting campaign. The decision of the Labour Executive to allow Labour representatives to enter the Coalition Ministry was approved by a majority of 1,405,000, and the predominance of those who held that the ministers who had just resigned should retain office was nearly as large. This momentous Congress represented 2,093,365 members in affiliated Societies.

Bristol, in common with other parts of the country, was seriously affected by the decision of the Government, announced on January 27th, to restrict certain classes of imports so that more shipping might be freed for food stuffs. Tobacco, fruit, and paper-making materials were included, all these being imports in which Bristol was much concerned. The large stocks of tobacco in hand prevented any immediate apprehension of a shortage of raw material in that industry. The check in supplies of paper, however, was seriously felt, and the newspapers were much reduced in size.

In the early months of the year the darkened streets and the restricted lighting in the shops (under the Order of February 10th) led some retailers to close earlier than formerly. The Lord Mayor (Dr. Barclay Baron) appealed through the newspapers that shopkeepers should cease business at 9 p.m. on Saturdays and 7 p.m. on other days, except that selected for the half-holiday. Many shops were closed still earlier.

Viscount French visited Bristol on February 23rd. He inspected the Remount Depot at Shirehampton, and afterwards went over the 2nd Southern General Hospital. Later in the day Lord French went to Bath, where he was publicly entertained to luncheon.

The Chairman of the Insurance Committee (Dr. Walter Saise) drew attention to the fact that fewer panel patients were treated in 1915, and also the number of prescriptions was smaller. The theory advanced to explain this falling-off in sickness was that higher earnings and better living had improved the standard of health of a section of the population.



Another interesting statement with regard to conditions at this period was made at a meeting of the City Council. It was that on March 31st, 1915, 1,445 meals were supplied to Bristol school children needing such assistance ; on March 31st, 1916, only 114 meals were supplied.

The first anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli was celebrated in Bristol on April 25th. Speeches were made with reference to that part of the campaign at a large gathering at the Mansion House. Many Gallipoli heroes attended.

On May 20th the Honorary Freedom of Bristol was presented to Mr. W. M. Hughes, Premier of Australia, and Sir Thomas Mackenzie, K.C.M.G., High Commissioner for New Zealand.

The Summer Time Act first came into force on May 21st. Bristol opinions were generally favourable after experience of this experiment, and the Measure was much valued by those cultivating allotments. The Law has been re-enacted annually, and has resulted in a material reduction of gas and electricity bills. A few people, however, continue to be strongly hostile, and farmers complain that it involves difficulties in their work.

The A.M.C. of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, held at the Victoria Rooms in June, discussed some important questions arising from the war. To keep attested members in full benefit a scheme had been adopted relieving them of the obligation to pay subscriptions, lodge funds being recompensed by a levy of a half-penny per week on members remaining in civil life. The increased call for men under the Derby scheme and the Military Service Act made it necessary to review the position. After much debate the A.M.C. adopted a new plan, under which the attested members who took advantage of the concession lost their sick benefits while serving, their contributions were reduced to half, and this half was to be secured for lodges by the adoption of a half-penny per week levy on members. The arrangement relieved members serving with H.M. Forces of the necessity of contributing.

The terrible sacrifice of life during the world conflict emphasised the desirability of sparing no effort to reduce preventable deaths in the home population. A reduction of infantile mortality was one of the directions in which it was hoped to effect an improvement, although the Bristol death-rate



among infants in their first year had been smaller than that in some of the great industrial centres. A Bristol Maternity and Child Welfare Committee were formed in June. A valuable educative work had been already done by the Schools for Mothers.

A novel feature characterised the meeting of the City Council on June 20th. A German machine-gun captured by the Bristol "Bantams" had been presented to the city, and was placed in the Council Chamber in front of the Lord Mayor's chair. The gun was afterwards displayed at the Art Gallery.

About this time an effort was made to stimulate thrift in a fashion that would be helpful to the country's war finance. The National War Savings movement was started, and a Bristol Executive met for the first time on June 21st. This form of saving was widely taken up and proved a great success.

Increased prices entailed no hardship in cases where earnings were also on the up grade, but they pressed seriously on those with fixed incomes. In particular people who were dependent upon a return from investments producing a bare living income suffered greatly owing to the decreased purchasing power of money. Pensioners were in the same category, and those who depended on the five shillings old age allowance from the State suffered most severely. In June the Bristol Board of Guardians passed a resolution declaring that no Old Age Pensioner ought to have less than 7s. 6d. per week while existing high prices continued. The Government afterwards increased the Old Age Pension to 7s. 6d., but the ascending ratio of prices led to a demand for a further increase in the amount. This was sanctioned by an Act proposed near the end of 1919, which raised the pension to 10s.

July 14th was fully observed in Bristol as France's Day. During the war period many "days" of this character were arranged. Hundreds of ladies joined in the work of selling flags and emblems in the streets and the Red Cross organisations of France, Russia, Italy, and America were among those aided.

At the Annual Meeting of the National Nautical School, Portishead, it was stated that 500 old boys were serving in the Navy and Army.

On July 23rd Sir William Ramsay died. He was one of the most distinguished chemists of the time. He was formerly



Principal of Bristol University College. His name properly comes within the scope of a war record, because he was the discoverer of several gases, among which was helium. This gas, owing to its non-inflammability and inert nature, is expected to take the place of hydrogen in buoyant air-craft, if adequate supplies are forthcoming.

Petrol was required in enormous quantities for military and aviation purposes, and the incessant demand led the Government in August to restrict the supply for motor vehicles and other civil purposes. Bristol motor buses for a time eked out supplies by the use of paraffin, and eventually a number of these vehicles were driven by ordinary coal gas derived from the mains of the Bristol Gas Company. To store sufficient gas for the journey each vehicle so driven carried on top a large bag made of a gas-proof fabric. When filled at a station provided in Colston Avenue for the purpose, the bags gave the buses a remarkable appearance. This source of power was quite successful, but the back-firing could not be prevented, and it was a common thing on the journey to hear a series of loud reports like those proceeding from machine-gun fire. A few private motors also were fitted with gas bags.

The increase in shipping freights was one of the notable effects of the war, and on August 25th a striking illustration of this was published in *The Western Daily Press* on the authority of a Bristol grain merchant. It was that freight on Canadian wheat was equivalent to 1½d. per 4 lb. loaf, while the larger haul from the River Plate brought the amount in this case up to 3¾d. Two cargoes of maize came to Bristol about this time from the River Plate. For one the invoice was for £69,273 9s. od., of which the freight was £50,447 5s. 9d., and the cost of the grain £18,826 3s. 3d. In the second case the invoice was for £60,056, freight being £42,892 and the maize £17,164.

September 21st was observed as Jack Cornwall's Day in Bristol schools, in memory of the young hero of the Jutland naval engagement.

From time to time there were allegations that men who ought to be serving were still in civil life, and the complaints stimulated efforts to comb out fit men for military duty.



Early in September the police of Bristol and elsewhere stopped many men apparently of military age and demanded the production of the card exempting them from military service. This rounding-up produced such small results that it was soon discontinued.

On Sunday, October 8th, Lord French inspected the Bristol Volunteer Regiment at Stoke Gifford, and spoke of the likelihood of Volunteers being more utilised for home defence.

Some of the relics of a Zeppelin wrecked in a bombing raid on England were sold by auction in Bristol on October 26th on behalf of the local Red Cross Society and the Lord Mayor's Hospital Sunday Fund. One piece of wire about two inches long was sold and resold until £30 17s. 6d. was produced.

On October 26th English wheat made a jump of 5s. per quarter at the Bristol market. Values consequently ranged from 71s. to 73s. per quarter. Best bread was then selling at 10d. per 4 lb. loaf. Another feature in connection with food supply at this time was the rapid increase in the price of potatoes. At the beginning of November the charge was 2d. per lb., or seven pounds for a shilling. Wet weather, potato disease, and scarcity of agricultural labour caused the rise. In the middle of the month the Government announced the appointment of a Food Dictator. Various measures were contemplated in regard to food, including an alteration in the quality of bread, so that the flour used might contain a greater percentage of the husk of the grain. About the same time the milk question claimed attention. Hitherto the farmers had been receiving an average of a shilling a gallon, and in Bristol the general retail price was 5d. per quart. The Gloucestershire and Somerset farmers decided that on and after December 1st the wholesale rate should be 1s. 4d. per gallon. The Government refused to assent to this, but eventually the retailers were allowed to increase their charge to 6d. per quart. The milk problem afterwards gave rise to much controversy, and proved to be one of the most difficult subjects in the work of food control. Retail prices eventually rose to a shilling per quart.

The sudden death of Sir George White, Bart., on November 22nd evoked much regret. As Chairman of the Bristol Royal



Infirmary he was the leader in the bold enterprise which led to the erection of the Edward VII. Memorial building, the opening of which was performed by King George and Queen Mary. This ceremony took place on June 28th, 1912, and during the proceedings it was announced that the new structure would be used as a war hospital in the event of the need arising. At the time the Great War was not dreamed of, and to some it subsequently seemed that the decision of Sir George White and those acting with him was marked by a prophetic instinct.

In the latter part of November a National Mission of Repentance and Hope was carried on. It was a Church of England effort to bring home to the country the spiritual lessons of the war. In Bristol great meetings were held at Colston Hall, and on Saturday, November 25th, about 9,000 people took part in a Bristol "March of Witness." The processions were in the four deaneries, and marched to appointed churches, where services were held. The weather was extremely wet, and many of the processionists were drenched. On this account the Redcliff service was abandoned.

In the annual report of the Bristol and District Grocers' and Provision Dealers' Association, drawn up in November, it was stated that food supplies had been maintained in 1916, and there had continued to be a brisk consumptive demand for the various products distributed by members of the trade, in spite of the advance that had occurred in prices. Figures, based on Board of Trade investigation, were given showing that increases in retail prices ranged from 20 per cent. in the case of margarine to 166 per cent. in that of sugar.

December, 1916, saw the introduction of women conductors on the Bristol tramcars. The women did their work well, and continued it until men were again available.

Writing to Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband (an Old Cliftonian), Sir Douglas Haig expressed warm approval of the work being done by Old Cliftonians toward assisting the education at Clifton College ("our old school" were the words of Sir Douglas) of the sons of fallen officers. The letter was read at the annual meeting of the Old Cliftonians' Society in London on December 11th, 1916.



1917.

In 1917 there were systematised efforts to re-state, and keep clear in the minds of the public, the war aims of the British Empire. Important national electoral changes were involved by the Representation of the People Act. It gave Bristol five representatives in the House of Commons, and made the area for Parliamentary purposes coterminous with that of municipal jurisdiction. The year was also marked by the consideration of after-war problems, including the relations between employers and employed, the care of men discharged from the Navy and Army, with the provision of pensions, training, and employment for the disabled, the improvement of educational methods and a raising of the financial status of teachers.

By January this year the price of bread had risen to 10½d. per 4 lb. loaf. It was obvious that unless special steps were taken the price would go higher. This feeling led to a bread economy campaign during the first half of the year. Eventually the Government decided that it was preferable as a matter of national policy to fix the price of bread at 9d. per 4 lb. loaf, the extra cost being met by a State subsidy.

The churches and chapels of Bristol were well represented in the war zones by the clergymen and ministers as well as by the manhood of the congregations. The effects were manifold. A number of places of worship, and more especially the small village chapels, were so bereft of the men who had been their mainstay that those who were left had a difficulty in carrying on, and the position was more than once brought before denominational conferences in this district. Large town congregations were much better able to withstand the strain. In a great number of instances in Bristol there was brought into force a system for maintaining touch with the absent members by forwarding them regular parcels of good things and keeping them supplied with letters from friends at home. The "Roll of Honour" became a customary thing at places of worship. The abnormal circumstances at home and in the foreign field tended to produce a profound influence in the outlook of those concerned. The denominational distinctions marking the religious life in this country were often lost sight of in the course of friendship and work in the



battle arena and in the great military camps. At home all suffered from the common stress, and there thus grew up a widespread desire for a more fraternal attitude between members of the various sections of the Christian Church. The subject was discussed in Bristol from many points of view. Between Nonconformist bodies the spirit of brotherliness already existing was strengthened, and many exhibited a readiness to sink minor differences for the sake of a closer unity. Not a few members of the Church of England were also anxious to find a method of bridging the gulf which separated Free Churches from the Anglican Communion, but the difficulties in this case were serious, and no one desired a uniformity involving the sacrifice of principles held to be fundamental. In Bristol the movement has its opponents as well as its friends. The appearance of a Church of England clergyman in a Nonconformist pulpit with the approval of the bishops of the dioceses directly concerned (Bristol and Bath and Wells) evoked (in January, 1917) a strong protest from the Bristol District of the English Church Union, and later the participation by one of the leading Nonconformist Ministers of Bristol in a service at a united gathering held in Bristol Cathedral to return thanks for peace gave rise to controversy lamented by the friends of Christian co-operation and indicative of the deep divisions still existent.

The spirit of union already referred to found expression in other directions. On January 12th a conference was held in the Bristol Council Chamber to consider the future relations of Capital and Labour. Dr. Cyril Norwood, then Head Master of Bristol Grammar School, had given an address at a private gathering some months earlier, and this conference was the outcome. Dr. Norwood suggested that all employees should be compelled to join their respective unions and all employers should be required to become members of their trade associations, so that "black-legging" and under-cutting on both sides should be stopped. The two sides, acting jointly, with all their cards on the table, should settle prices and conditions of work, and it was proposed that the decision of a defined majority in a trade should be binding on others. To prevent the community from being held to ransom by the united industry it was suggested that an independent State Assessor would have to take part in the proceedings. Developments somewhat











on these lines afterwards occurred in several industries, in which joint boards on the lines of the Whitley Report were brought into existence. Several Bristolians, among whom were Mr. E. H. C. Wethered, Mr. T. B. Johnston, Alderman Frank Sheppard, Mr. Percy Steadman, and Mr. G. B. Britton, M.P., took a keen interest in the advancement of movements of this kind, and are entitled to be counted as pioneers in a departure which promises to exert a profound influence on industrial relations in the future. Some trade unionists were openly hostile to the new departure, and some employers indifferent.

The War Office regarded the accidental communication of information as fraught with so much danger, that early in the year, on the initiative of the Department, Bristol Education Committee issued to teachers a suggestion that a lesson should be given to the school children on the mischievous effects of careless talk on war matters, which might spread information of assistance to the enemy. It was hoped to warn parents by this means.

A variety of proposals were made to save labour and promote financial economy. In the middle of January, the Suggestions Section of the National Service League recommended the abolition of retail credit, shop window dressing, and calling on customers for orders. Further, it was proposed to make it compulsory on purchasers to carry home parcels of foodstuffs not exceeding fourteen pounds. Some of these proposals were regarded with disfavour, but the restriction of credit was approved by most shopkeepers. The carrying of parcels by purchasers became quite common, especially after the Food Control Committee appealed to the public and to traders to adopt the plan.

Early in February the Food Controller issued a request to the public to reduce food consumption. As an average he suggested for each person  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of meat, 4 lb. of bread (including flour and cakes), and  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. of sugar per week. Children were included in the average, so that the adults' share would be rather more in many families.

A party of Indian officers on a visit from the Front were entertained in Bristol on February 9th, and shown some of the city's interesting features.

A section of the 128th Battalion of the Canadian Regiment



(known as "The Moosejaws" after the town from which they came) visited Bristol in March. Some of the members had associations with the city, hence its selection as the place for depositing the colours of the battalion. The colours were ceremonially handed to the Lord Mayor on the steps of the Council House. The officers and men were entertained. At night the "Moosejaws'" band gave a concert at Colston Hall, and on the next day (Sunday) the visitors placed a laurel wreath on the Cabot tablet on St. Augustine's Bridge. The colours were deposited at the Cathedral, and the Bishop (Rt. Rev. Dr. Nickson) gave an address on faith and patriotism. In 1919 a detachment came to Bristol and received their colours from the custody of the Dean and Chapter. The "Moosejaws" had suffered severely on the field.

Grave apprehensions with regard to food supplies prevailed during the spring months. To increase the production of food the public were asked to assist in digging market gardens and allotments owned by men who had been called up. A number of citizens joined in this part-time form of national service, and the Bristol Volunteers took regular spade duty of this kind week by week. Indeed, this digging was the chief practical result in Bristol of the first National Service Scheme. The local committee, formed after Mr. Chamberlain's visit, dissolved in July, declaring that they could do so little that it was not worth while to continue in being. Other local committees soon adopted the same course. The Bristol Baptist Association issued a request to churches to supply voluntary labour for soldiers' gardens and allotments. It was also reported that the congregations of Tyndale Baptist Chapel and Redland Park Congregational Church had together formed an Allotment Society and secured ground.

In March at the annual meeting of the Bristol Tramways and Carriage Company Ltd. the Chairman, Mr. Samuel White, stated that the Company had 800 women filling the places of men gone to the war.

On April 15th a great meeting organised by the Free Church Council advocated drink prohibition during the war. At a local brewery meeting about this time a serious view was taken of the position and prospects of the trade. Licensed houses were opened for only five and a half hours each day, and there



had been a great curtailment of the barrelage allowed to be brewed. In the end the brewing business appeared to suffer no decrease in prosperity, though prices were much higher than before the war.

On April 25th for the second time Gallipoli Day was observed in Bristol, and about 300 men took part in the proceedings.

The food question became increasingly important as the tonnage available for importing foreign products was reduced, partly by enemy submarines but more because of the number of ships carrying supplies to our Forces. In the middle of April comprehensive regulations were made restricting meals in public places, such as restaurants and hotels. Wednesday in Bristol was directed to be observed as a meatless day in such establishments. The rations of meat, sugar, bread and flour allowed at each meal were limited to scheduled quantities. Meat was held to embrace poultry or game, but as fish was not included, the meatless day involved less hardship than the smallness of the allowance of food on other days. Many persons whose business kept them in town felt this particularly at tea, at which only 2 oz. of bread or cake were allowed to be served. Afterwards the supply of sugar at such meals at restaurants was stopped. On May 22nd a Food Economy Exhibition was held in Bristol. Ground maize was recommended as a substitute for wheat flour, but found little favour and some shopkeepers had to sell their stocks at a sacrifice.

A notable effort in the same direction was the issue of the following Proclamation :—

BY THE KING.

A PROCLAMATION.

GEORGE R.I.

WE, being persuaded that the abstention from all unnecessary consumption of grain will furnish the surest and most effectual means of defeating the devices of Our enemies and thereby of bringing the war to a speedy and successful termination, and out of Our resolve to leave nothing undone which can contribute to these ends or to the welfare of Our people in these times of grave stress and anxiety, have thought fit, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, to issue



this Our Royal Proclamation, most earnestly exhorting and charging all those of Our loving subjects the men and women of Our realm who have the means of procuring articles of food other than wheaten corn, as they tender their own immediate interests, and feel for the wants of others, especially to practise the greatest economy and frugality in the use of every species of grain: And We do for this purpose more particularly exhort and charge all heads of households to reduce the consumption of bread in their respective families by at least one-fourth of the quantity consumed in ordinary times; to abstain from the use of flour in pastry, and moreover, carefully to restrict or wherever possible to abandon the use thereof in all other articles than bread: And We do also, in like manner, exhort and charge all persons who keep horses to abandon the practice of feeding the same on oats or other grain, unless they shall have received from Our Food Controller a licence to feed horses on oats or other grain to be given only in cases where it is necessary to do so with a view to maintain the breed of horses in the national interest: And We do hereby further charge and enjoin all Ministers of Religion in their respective churches and chapels within Our United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland to read, or cause to be read, this Our Proclamation on the Lord's Day, for four successive weeks after the issue thereof.

Given at Our Court at Buckingham Palace, this Second day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seventeen, and in the Seventh year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

On Thursday, May 24th, this document was read by the Lord Mayor from the Council House steps, and afterwards at various much-frequented spots in the city.

A graphic story of the Battle of Messines was told in *The Western Daily Press* by Captain the Rev. R. C. Griffin, Minister of Horfield Baptist Church, who was in the main advanced dressing station as chaplain. He described the battle as "super-hell let loose." Mr. Griffin was among those specially



mentioned by Sir Douglas Haig in his Despatches. Several other chaplains from Bristol won distinctions for valour.

American Independence Day was observed in Bristol on July 4th, Mr. S. J. King being the leading spirit in organising the celebration. The United States flag and the Union Jack were displayed side by side, school children (who were given a half-holiday) received a two-colour leaflet on which the two flags were printed, with the words: "To celebrate Independence Day and to welcome the United States of America as our Ally in the Great War for the freedom of nations."

The commencement of the fourth year of war gave occasion for special addresses in some of the places of worship. The Bishop of Bristol at the Cathedral (August 5th) made a strong appeal for Christian fortitude to fight on for the right.

Bristolians gave a hearty welcome to a group of distinguished Italian representatives visiting this country on a military mission. Captain Laureati, who shortly before had flown in a heavier than air machine from Turin to London, was among the party. The Italian official war film shown at the Triangle Picture Hall was exhibited in connection with the visit, and it gave striking illustrations of the wonderful nature of warfare in the ice-bound Alps bordering Austrian territory.

A Bristol soldier shooting his wife at Temple Meads Station in October suggests one of the darker aspects of the many phases of war time. It would have been marvellous if the break-up of home life in millions of cases had not been attended by disastrous results. On the one hand there were complaints of the unfaithfulness of wives while husbands were absent, on the other there were a remarkable number of bigamous marriages by soldiers. The Courts in Bristol had to deal with many cases of this character in 1918 and 1919. In the shooting case to which allusion is made the circumstances were intensely dramatic. The soldier was acquitted at his trial.

The King and Queen came to Bristol on November 8th, and kept a two days' engagement in the city and district. A visit was first paid to the National Shell Factory, St. Philip's. From there the royal visitors were driven to the tobacco factory of Messrs. W. D. and H. O. Wills Ltd., Bedminster. At the Council House the Lord Mayor (Dr. Barclay Baron)



presented to their Majesties a number of those engaged in war work and also representatives of trade unions. Luncheon was served in the Royal train, which remained at Temple Meads Station. In the afternoon the King and Queen proceeded to Durdham Down, where, on the plateau near the Reservoir, an investiture took place. The day's engagements were brought to a close by a visit to the works of the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company at Filton. "Bristol" aircraft were then seen in the course of construction. The Royal train was brought round to Henbury, where their Majesties passed the night. The first part of the next morning was spent at Bath, where, among other places, a visit was paid to the engineering works of Messrs. Stothert & Pitt. A number of special mechanical devices were there being manufactured for war purposes. Leaving Bath by motor-cars, Trowbridge was reached after a journey at the speed of an express train. At this old Wiltshire town, and afterwards at Melksham, other important factories were inspected by their Majesties. The tour illustrated in a very impressive manner the large part played by women in the production of munitions of war, their services being quickly rendered efficient by careful training in a limited range of operations. The subdivision of work, the adaptation of ingenious machinery for producing required results, and the working of this mechanism by women after such a very short training, indicated great possibilities of cheapened production in peace-time. Such methods, however, were the outcome of a temporary suspension of trade union rules. With the declaration of peace this suspension ceased, and difficulties stood in the way of those who wished to put into permanent use the war-time experience. A novel feature connected with the royal tour was the continuous presence of a party of journalists.

On November 9th Bristol Council appointed Alderman Frank Sheppard Lord Mayor and Mr. Percy Steadman Sheriff. Alderman Sheppard was the first representative of the Labour Party to act as Chief Magistrate and the choice was abundantly justified.

The working of the Whitley Scheme occupied the attention of a meeting of Bristol employers engaged in transport work on November 28th. It then appeared from the speeches



that in Bristol the organisation of the two sides was unusually good, and it had been possible to adjust many disputes without a stoppage of work.

As winter approached the darkness of the streets gave rise to renewed protests. The Chief Constable was able to arrange some relaxation of the former rule as the result of a personal interview with the Home Secretary.

At the end of November at a meeting of the Board of Guardians attention was called to the marked decline in the amount of pauperism in Bristol.

On December 4th an impressive service was held at the Cathedral in memory of those associated with the University of Bristol who had fallen during the war.

Newspapers early in December published the details of an awful disaster at Halifax, Nova Scotia, caused by the blowing up of a munition ship in the harbour. The Lord Mayor of Bristol cabled a sympathetic message on behalf of the citizens.

Potatoes were among the products that came under State control, and in a Bristol case in December fines amounting to nearly £400 were inflicted on merchants who had exceeded the maximum price. The answer in such cases was that farmers held back supplies unless a higher price than allowed was paid, and the public therefore were deprived of this food.

The liquor question presented itself again and again during the war. On December 10th Bristol was visited by Dr. Sheldon (author of a popular religious story, *In His Steps*) and other American and Canadian representatives, who had come to this country to tell of transatlantic experience of prohibition. A series of conferences were held in Bristol and a meeting at Colston Hall. It was stated by one of the visitors that many Americans felt strongly because of the temptation they feared would be placed in the way of American lads who had come to England on their way to the Front.

Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the Imperial Staff, paid Bristol a visit on December 12th. At Clifton College he handed to the School team a trophy won for shooting, and in an address referred to the enormous load of responsibility resting on Sir Douglas Haig. Sir William afterwards inspected the Officers' Training Corps at the University.



At the close of the year a serious position arose in the meat trade. Prices were controlled, but cattle offered by auction ran up to figures inconsistent with the prices by which wholesalers and retailers were bound. The Bristol Master Butchers resolved to close their shops after December 29th, and not to re-open them until supplies could be obtained at rates which would render it possible to comply with the State prices. On December 20th a new Order was issued to meet the difficulty. Cattle were directed to be sold in markets only (except when licences were issued in special cases), and animals were to be graded by experts, prices being fixed for the several grades.

1918.

In 1918 the growing length of food queues, especially for meat and margarine, became more than an inconvenience to those concerned. It tended to discontent and to the undermining of that spirit of fortitude with which earlier troubles had been cheerfully borne. In the middle of January grocery firms here and elsewhere exhibited outside the shop notices that no bacon, butter, margarine or cheese remained in stock. Severe catering restrictions were imposed. In part the food shortage arose from the policy of safeguarding supplies, so as to be prepared for conditions even worse than those hitherto experienced. Poultry could be obtained, but half a guinea for a small bird was commonly charged. Fish was also very dear. An alteration in the usual quality of flour had the effect of giving consumers a percentage of the wheat husk which ordinarily would have gone for stock feeding. While this method of economising in the use of cereals was effectual in one direction, it left farmers seriously short of food for their cattle, and this in turn lessened the milk production. In January the Government sent to Bristol and to other centres of population sample loaves of bread containing a percentage of potatoes, and this method of saving grain was adopted.

There was nothing like a food famine at any time. Those who suffered most were the people who could not adapt their daily dietary to the supplies that were available. There were some who were unable or unwilling to accustom themselves to the use of margarine or other butter substitutes; there was



a large demand for white bread of the pre-war kind on grounds of health, real or imaginary ; there were a few, whose instincts were ultra-conservative, who, when the meat shortage was most severe and the necessity of relying on frozen carcasses from overseas was imperative, still refused to accept this substitute for the home product. They consequently suffered from the food difficulties of this trying period. The people at large were quite adequately fed, and in the absence of a rationing system a number no doubt had more than their share. There was nothing to prevent a person standing in a queue until the desired purchase had been effected, and then moving off to repeat the process elsewhere. This unquestionably happened in many instances ; and another rather remarkable feature was the borrowing of babies by women who went shopping, it being found that kindly-disposed folk gave precedence to a woman with a child in her arms.

The longest queue recorded in this city was the outcome of an attempt by the local Food Control Committee to lessen this evil. A huge quantity of margarine was taken to the Corn Exchange and put up in half-pound packages ready for customers. At the appointed time a procession of buyers entered at one door and passed out of the building on the opposite side. In this way thousands of people were served with extreme rapidity by a large staff of assistants. Among them was the Chairman of the Food Control Committee himself. But the announcement of this experiment brought people from all parts of the city, with the result that there was a waiting queue extending through a number of the central streets, and it is computed that at least 4,000 persons were at one time thus lined up awaiting their turn. This result led to the abandonment of the system. Rationing was clearly the only way of meeting the problem, and that system was introduced on February 25th (1918). On the 26th a further step was taken, a National Food Kitchen on the Weir being brought under the control of the Corporation. For some time previously it had been carried on by voluntary effort.

Another outcome of the grave national position was an effort to encourage pig-keeping. The Food Controller of the day, Lord Rhondda, was in Bristol in the latter part of March, and besides conferring with the local food control authorities,



addressed a great meeting at Colston Hall. He referred to the remarkable assistance Germany derived from her huge production of pigs and potatoes. Bristol Sanitary Committee relaxed their by-laws with regard to pigsties, so that while no undue hindrance was placed in the way of would-be pig-keepers the public health should be safe-guarded. House-holders were invited to keep edible substances, such as potato parings and cabbage leaves, separate from the ashes, the idea being that this stuff should be collected by the ashmen and sold for feeding purposes. The proposal to start municipal piggeries was not adopted, and for various reasons the collection of pig food from the houses was only a partial success.

A Royal Proclamation recognised the gravity of the position at this most difficult phase of the war, and called upon the people to observe a day of intercession on behalf of the nation and Empire. Sunday, January 6th, was set apart for the purpose of prayer "that we might have the clear-sightedness and strength necessary to the victory of our cause." At the suggestion of the Bishop of Bristol, a prefatory joint service was held on Saturday, and a great congregation representing various Christian denominations gathered in the Cathedral Church to join in the intercessory service which then took place. On the Sunday there were several services at the Cathedral and a Nonconformist gathering was held at Colston Hall.

It was noticeable, prior to the war, that the demand for boy labour exceeded the supply. In 1914 and 1915 this was intensified, and lads found themselves able to obtain high wages. In 1916 and 1917 conditions altered, and there were many boys in search of situations. Reporting at the beginning of 1918, the Bristol Advisory Committee drew attention to this change, and said in spite of every effort to check the tendency amongst boys to change jobs, frequently for insufficient reason, the habit was very much on the increase.

The exigencies of war time produced effects in the management of shops that are likely to have a lasting effect. The replacement of male assistants by women suggested the desirability of allowing them to return to their homes fairly early in the evening, the darkness of the streets being an additional reason. There was also the necessity for curtailing the consumption of coal, gas, and electricity, which led to restriction



of shop lighting. An Order from the Home Office brought about general early closing which years of voluntary action had not been able to secure. A dinner hour was adopted by some firms, so that all employed might have a fixed and regular time for their mid-day meal.

Of "the 1914 Star" Days held in Bristol during the war the most memorable was that of January 29th, 1918, when Field-Marshal Viscount French, the hero of Mons and Ypres, met his comrades in this city and addressed them in a moving speech at the old Rifle Drill Hall, Queen's Road. The service invitations to this celebration of the glorious deeds of the "Contemporaries" were restricted to officers and men entitled to the 1914 Star—every man of the original Expeditionary Force who served from Mons to Ypres, from August 5th to November 22nd-23rd, 1914—who happened to be in Bristol. The response was remarkable, and no fewer than 800 officers and men paraded. Many of them were on leave from active service, some were in hospital in Bristol or the neighbourhood, and a good proportion were silver-badge men. For a service at the Cathedral the aldermen and councillors joined in a procession. An address was given by the Bishop of Bristol.

Evidence of the important part that women were taking in agricultural operations in this part of England was afforded on February 8th by a procession of about 600 land girls through Bristol streets. They attended a meeting at Colston Hall, where speeches were made in appreciation of this work and an encouragement offered to others to share in this essential and highly patriotic effort. The wider question of National Service was discussed by Sir Auckland Geddes when he visited the city in the middle of March. His view of the man-power situation was extremely grave.

Gallipoli Day in Bristol on April 25th was notable for the presence of General Sir Ian S. M. Hamilton, G.C.B., D.S.O., Commander of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and a new feature was an impressive drum-head service conducted in College Green by Colonel the Rev. Canon J. G. Alford, senior chaplain of the district.

Throughout the war period Bristolians took a keen delight in entertaining and caring for members of H.M. Forces. Several large bodies of visiting bluejackets received the city's hospitality



and heartily enjoyed the programmes provided for them. April 5th, 1918, was one of these naval days. Many men from H.M. ships were invited to participate in the proceedings.

A glimpse of the effect of the war on the school children of Bristol was afforded in June in the report of the Acting School Medical Officer to the Bristol Education Committee (Miss Madeline S. Baker). "Undoubtedly at the present time more than ever before," said this lady doctor, "the individual school child is in need of close medical supervision. War conditions are seriously affecting the home life of the nation. The fathers are absent on military service ; the mothers, either from necessity or from choice, are constantly found to be absent all the day in the factory or workshop, the elder children, and regrettably often those between 13 and 14 years of age, are also under employment and earning wages, which tend to exempt them from parental control. Such conditions re-act seriously on the children of school age, and while on all sides those most closely in touch with the children assure me that the standard of feeding in the homes has in many cases been raised owing to the increased income earned, it is deplorably evident that lack of discipline and cleanliness and the prevalence of diseases prolonged by dirt and neglect are increasing amongst school children. In the schools the depletion of the teaching staff and the occupation of head teachers in class teaching cannot be without effect."

One branch of activity having a close relationship to efforts of the kind just described was welfare work in factories. The study of physical and psychological conditions connected with industrial life and the application of a scientific system of research to these important subjects are likely in future to be numbered among the most valuable social results of the war period. The investigation of industrial fatigue was being carried out at the University of Bristol by Professor Stanley Kent before the commencement of hostilities, and the creation of large State-controlled munition factories worked under novel conditions provided a field for inquiry the lessons of which it was soon discovered had a direct bearing on output. The increased knowledge that has resulted and is likely to result from research of this kind, coupled with efforts to reorganise works processes so that time and labour may be



saved and production increased, should profoundly modify some of the pre-war industrial conditions to the advantage of all concerned.

It was matter for regret that in Bristol and elsewhere at a time when reconstruction problems were being debated, and their ventilation in the Press was particularly desirable, the shortage of paper rendered it necessary to reduce the size of newspapers, so that they became mere pigmies. This difficulty was directly due to the restriction of imports of paper made in other countries, and of the raw material required by British manufacturers. In various parts of the country small journals had to cease publication, and in Bristol the paper famine created serious difficulty not only to newspaper producers but in other large industries dependent on paper. The position led to the establishment of an important salvage scheme, and the collection of waste paper was extensively carried on by the civic authorities and by Bristol newspaper proprietors and other firms.

In passing it may be stated that the Bristol newspapers, in spite of their own troubles, set a good example of cheerful patriotism all through the years of war. They originated appeals for special purposes; they supported the Government's various demands for men, munitions and money, devoting much of their space to the local efforts to recruit men, to raise war funds, and particularly to help the War Loan campaigns. Whether the news of the day was good or bad the Bristol newspapers strove to exercise a steadying influence, so that their readers might not be too depressed by reverses nor too elated by successes, but should never cease to do all that was humanly possible to promote ultimate victory.

The report of the Committee on Expenditure which was noticed in the newspapers on July 1st contained critical references to the national shipyards at Chepstow, Beachley and Portbury. It was recognised that the increase of ship-building was urgent, nevertheless the Committee held that this did not justify such schemes being commenced without estimating the cost or without any reference being made by the Admiralty to the Treasury. As to Beachley on the Wye and Portbury on the Avon, the Committee said the evidence indicated that the locality selected was suitable, though owing



to the narrowness of the rivers for launching purposes the largest class of vessels could not be constructed. The sites at Beachley and Portbury seemed satisfactory for the purpose, but that at Chepstow was not equally so. About £50,000 was spent on the preliminary work of excavating fitting-out berths, and then this part of the scheme was abandoned and an arrangement entered into with the Bristol Corporation for the use of Portishead Dock for fitting-out purposes.

American Independence Day was celebrated with great heartiness in Bristol on July 4th. About 300 American troops came to the city by train from Yate and marched through flag-bedecked streets to the Cathedral, where the Star-Spangled Banner was displayed above the pulpit. The Dean (the Rev. Dr. Wynne Willson) gave an address. Many of the United States troops were Catholics, and that section attended service at the Pro-Cathedral and listened to a discourse from Canon Lee. Luncheon at the Rifle Drill Hall in Old Market Street followed, and the speech-making gave an opportunity for interchange of greetings between the representatives of Great Britain and the Western Republic. A great procession, in which the Americans formed a part, then marched to a saluting base on the fringe of the Downs, and thence to the Clifton Zoological Gardens, where tea was provided. In the evening the visiting officers were entertained to dinner by the Society of Merchant Venturers. A party of American bluejackets, from the U.S. ship the *Cuyama*, also participated in this celebration.

Subsequently the American Consul at Bristol, Mr. J. S. Armstrong, conveyed to the Lord Mayor the thanks of the President of the United States.

In September the Lord Mayor (Alderman Frank Sheppard), in a letter to the newspapers, said there was a desire on the part of many people in Bristol to extend hospitality to American soldiers on leave from the Front, and the Bristol Rotary Club had undertaken the duty of arranging for those who visited Bristol.

On July 12th, in various parts of England, France's Day was observed. Bristol anticipated this celebration in June, but in July the Lord Mayor sent the following telegram to the President of the French Republic: "The Lord Mayor and Citizens of Bristol send you their heartfelt



feelings upon this your Day, and desire to express their great admiration for the magnificent fight you are making for justice and humanity." The following reply was received: "The President of the French Republic, deeply touched by the congratulations and good wishes which you sent to him on the occasion of France's Day, thanks you with all his heart in the name of the people of France, closely united with the British people in the defence of right and liberty."

July 14th marked the commencement of a new national rationing scheme. In commenting upon the conditions at that time *The Western Daily Press* gave the following: "It would be interesting to accompany a fresh arrival from Germany or Austria on a tour through the Bristol shopping districts. The stranger would certainly be impressed by the window displays at the boot and shoe establishments, and the drapers' abundant and varied stocks would remind him of the dire effects produced in the Central Empires by the Allied blockade shutting out raw materials; the abundance of food would throw into darker shadow the famine scenes which had become familiar in his own land. In the food shops he would probably note, amongst other things, both the variety and the great quantity of the canned fish which anyone can buy without restriction. Probably never before were there so many kinds of canned fish, and methods of preparing them for use."

At the meeting of the Bristol Food Control Committee a few days later reference was made to the glut of imported bacon and hams and the risk of food being wasted owing to delays in transit and lack of cold storage.

The Conference in Bristol of the British Society of Chemical Industry in July, 1918, led to many references to war-time conditions and lessons. A hopeful account was given of a British method of recovering potash from waste products from blast furnaces, and of the steps taken to manufacture glass ware for laboratory use when the German supply ceased at the commencement of hostilities.

For the Conference of Chemists mentioned in the preceding paragraph Professor B. T. P. Barker, of Bristol University Research Station, Long Ashton, submitted a paper on the production of a palatable jelly from cider apples, which fruit could be purchased for 20s. a ton or less. Sugar was scarce,



and the problem was to make an attractive article by the concentration of the apple juice. Great quantities of this jelly were sold by grocers and fruiterers.

At the beginning of August Bristolians had the opportunity of greeting a much larger contingent of American troops than hitherto. The men landed at Avonmouth, and arrangements were made for them to break their train journey at Clifton Down Station. They arrived at the Municipal Art Gallery in two sections. The Lord Mayor gave a short but heart-stirring welcome. The officers and men were entertained, and to each was handed a copy of Mr. S. J. King's "travel talk" book, and a lithographed copy of the King's letter of greeting to the American forces. This read as follows: "Soldiers of the United States,—The people of the British Isles welcome you on your way to take your stand beside the armies of many nations now fighting in the Old World the great battle of human freedom. The Allies will gain new heart and spirit in your company. I wish that I could shake the hand of each one of you and bid you God-speed on your mission.—GEORGE R.I."

August 4th was kept in Bristol by services at the Cathedral and Pro-Cathedral and by a great meeting at Colston Hall. The anxiety caused by the German advance in the spring had given place to a hopeful spirit, due to the more recent French victories. Besides the indoor gatherings, the Anglican and Free Churches in the Bishopston district joined in an open-air service in St. Andrew's Park, and the Comrades of the Great War met on the Downs to commemorate the sacrifice made by all the gallant men who had fallen, and to send a message of encouragement to those still serving. A message in the August number of the *Bristol Diocesan Magazine* reflected the spirit of this Day of Remembrance: "A sudden and dramatic change has taken place in the last few weeks which has altered the whole outlook, and while undue optimism is to be avoided, it is not too much to say that the climax of all our weary years of waiting and of hope deferred now seems to have arrived. The time for the ringing of joy bells has not yet come, and the end may still be far off. Remembrance and intercession are therefore the true notes for a day of universal prayer, but these will all be comprehended and summed up in thanksgiving, for the darkness is passing and the dawn is fast breaking. Never





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THE LORD MAYOR (ALDERMAN H. W. TWIGGS) READING THE PROCLAMATION OF PEACE  
ON THE STEPS OF THE COUNCIL HOUSE, JULY 5TH, 1919.







was there a more appropriate season for the prayers of the nation, for much still hangs in the balance, and the next few weeks will be weeks of final decision. We have gained much, but there is good reason to hope for even greater things, and success may yet succeed success to an extent which can be hoped, though not expressed in words. In this we shall do well to emulate the strength of our Allies and also of the Press, which has been conspicuous for its moderation."

It was about this time that Marshal Foch assumed supreme command of the Allied Armies; Germany's resistance and morale were found to be weakening, Sir Douglas Haig's successful "hammer-strokes" on the Somme promised to be the beginning of great things, and the Premier in metaphorical language spoke of full speed ahead after coming out of a dark tunnel.

Much private generosity was exhibited during the war, and great though the calls, there was rarely an appeal for a worthy object that did not meet with a ready response in Bristol. In the summer of this year (1918) an interesting instance was reported. A sermon was preached at St. Mary's Church, Stoke Bishop, on behalf of the Missions to Seamen, and an appeal made to provide a new hut on a certain part of our coast for the men of the mine-sweepers. A lady in the congregation at once sent a cheque for £500, and the hut was soon afterwards opened.

On August 14th a meeting at the Council House was held to launch a scheme of part-time service, promoted by the National Service Department. The proposal was very sympathetically received.

In the autumn Sir Herbert Warren, as Chairman of the Council of Clifton College, wrote to Sir Douglas Haig to congratulate him on his recent successes. The General replied: "I am very grateful to you and the Council of Clifton College for sending me such a kindly message of greeting and good will. It is a source of great pride and pleasure that our fortunes out here are followed with such generous appreciation by my old School."

The control of the distribution of potatoes revealed the fact that Bristol was in a "deficit zone," in other words the district consumed more potatoes than it produced. In Bristol



the development of the allotments resulted in the local production of a very large quantity of potatoes, but the district still failed to meet its own requirements. The Ministry of Food, in a warning against the waste of bread, enforced the appeal by a striking calculation. If each man in Great Britain wasted a pound of bread or meat each month, the extra shipping tonnage required to make up the loss would be such that the transport of American troops would be lessened in that period by 2,000 men. On the other hand, a saving of one pound per month would render possible the shipment of 2,000 more American soldiers. This point was brought to the notice of Bristol citizens. Many complaints were made about this time that the regulation prohibiting the sale of bread for consumption until twelve hours after it had come from the oven gave rise to considerable waste.

On September 20th Bristol welcomed a number of representatives of our Overseas Dominions, including a party of twenty journalists from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Newfoundland. The visitors were entertained to luncheon, and during the speeches reference was made to the fact that about 2,000 Australians had benefited by treatment at Bishop's Knoll, and had gone away with grateful memories of the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Bush. The Rt. Hon. Andrew Fisher, Lord Morris, and Sir Thomas Mackenzie were among the speakers.

The Bristol District Small Holdings and Allotments Federation Ltd. published a list of affiliated societies and the secretaries, with the intimation that wives or dependents of absent men who were in difficulty about raising the potato crop or performing other work on their allotments should communicate with a representative of the local association. Arrangements had been made for voluntary helpers to look after the interests of those serving with H.M. Forces. A report made to the Education Committee in September showed that in all teachers and scholars in the city were cultivating about ten acres of land. For the help of those citizens who had not had much experience in gardening the Education Committee arranged classes in war-time cultivation.

In November a café lounge was opened at Carlton Chambers



by the Lord Mayor. It was established by the Rotary Club for the use of American soldiers.

The autumn was notable for the severity of an influenza epidemic. In the week ended November 2nd 1917 deaths from the disease were reported. The figures did not include fatal cases of pneumonia following influenza.

The historic day for which a war-weary world had waited through long years of terrible conflict and poignant suffering arrived on November 11th, 1918. In Bristol it was a sullen morning, and people went about their business as usual, except for the consciousness of the imminence of a great event. Here and there little groups could be seen in the vicinity of the newspaper offices, and when the official news that an armistice had been agreed to was received the special editions of the papers were eagerly snatched up by purchasers, who treated their change for small silver with a cheerful indifference. The news spread with amazing rapidity. Busy city men stopped passers-by; shopkeepers and assistants rushed eagerly into the street; church bells rang out, and the city was thrilled by the glad tidings. All thought of business was immediately abandoned; most places closed down, and the holiday spirit even brought about the cessation of the tramcar and bus services.

The following telegram from the Lord Mayor, Sheriff, and citizens of Bristol was sent to Lord Stamfordham immediately after the receipt of the official news: "The Lord Mayor, Sheriff, and citizens of Bristol send loyal and hearty congratulations to their Majesties on the splendid victory achieved by the Allied Forces, and the signing of the Armistice, which they trust will bring to the world an enduring, just, and lasting peace." Later the Lord Mayor received the following message from the King: "Buckingham Palace. My Lord Mayor,—I thank you with all my heart for the loyal message of congratulation you have addressed to me in the name of the Sheriff and citizens of Bristol on this memorable day of the conclusion of an armistice, and I reciprocate, with all my heart the hope you express that the blessings of a lasting peace may now be vouchsafed to the world.—GEORGE R.I."

Within the space of an hour the chief streets of the city had been transformed into gaily beflagged thoroughfares, thronged with excited citizens who had poured out of business



houses and factories to give voice to the pent-up emotions of four dark years of waiting and watching. Cheer after cheer broke out as the crowd, with flags waving and ribbons floating in the breeze, surged through the streets. Motor-cars, motor lorries, trolleys, and horse vehicles were commandeered, soldiers, sailors, and civilians jumping aboard, and every conceivable musical instrument was brought into play. The inevitable bands of ragamuffins, some without boots, headed by a large Union Jack, and each one beating a battered tin can, marched in orderly fashion, four abreast, up Clare Street, singing popular war songs and making an indescribable medley of noise. Then came the procession of University Students, in cap and gown, with flags of all the Allies, followed closely by four stalwart American soldiers, each holding a corner of a gigantic Union Jack, and singing lustily "Rule Britannia"—a graceful compliment indeed. The young officers connected with the Cadet School were characteristically lively, and the scenes of jubilation were such as have never been seen in the city before. Some of the women and girls were particularly excited, and here and there in the streets groups of them indulged in dancing, while the spectators formed an admiring ring round the performers.

An immense crowd congregated around the Council House in expectation of the visit of the new Lord Mayor (Alderman Twiggs), who on making his appearance was greeted with enthusiastic cheers. His Lordship was accompanied by the Lord Bishop, the ex-Lord Mayor (Alderman Sheppard), the Sheriff (Mr. Ivie M. Dunlop), and other leading citizens. After a verse of the National Anthem had been sung, the Lord Mayor, addressing the crowd from the Council House steps, said: "We have won a glorious victory for the cause of justice, freedom, and civilisation. We are devoutly thankful that the last shot has been fired, and we can look forward to welcoming back our boys to their homes. I know that you are full of the desire to rejoice, but I want you to remember the number of homes where sorrow is still lingering because of the great sacrifices that have had to be made to win this victory for the cause of humanity. I do not want to repress your rejoicing, but I want you to think of others."

The Bishop, who followed, said: "Never was there a moment



in which our hearts should be more full of thankfulness than at this supreme moment in the history of our country, but never let us forget, after these four years of sadness, that we owe the victory, under God, to the splendid heroism of our soldiers and sailors and airmen. Let us make our country worthy of the sacrifices given for it."

Both speeches were heartily cheered. Alderman Sheppard, who also spoke, appealed to his hearers to control themselves in this moment of victory. "Let us do all we can," he added, "to make ourselves worthy of the victory." The Doxology was sung with great fervour at the close of the speaking. The Lord Mayor, the Bishop, and the ex-Lord Mayor next addressed a gathering of business men at the Commercial Rooms, giving expression to the feelings of thankfulness which everybody must have felt when the great news was announced. Subsequently visits were paid to the Constitutional Club and the Liberal Club, and finally the Lord Mayor and the Lord Bishop attended the weekly luncheon of the Bristol Rotarians at the Royal Hotel, where further patriotic speeches were made.

The educational institutions participated in the rejoicings. The undergraduates of the University held a hastily devised "rag," which afforded much amusement to thousands of spectators. The boys of Clifton College were given a half-holiday, and a special service was held in the College Chapel. A telegram of congratulation was sent to the British Commander-in-Chief in France, Sir Douglas Haig. At the Grammar School also a half-holiday was given. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed at the Colston Girls' School when the head mistress announced the news. A short service of thanksgiving was held, and the girls were promised a whole holiday.

The public rejoicings were maintained throughout the whole day, and in the evening Clare Street, St. Augustine's Parade, and many other parts were ablaze with dazzling lights (without incurring the displeasure of "Dora"), and a noteworthy feature was a joyful procession of discharged soldiers and sailors with bands and banners. At the Prince's Theatre and the Theatre Royal the audiences joined in singing the National Anthem, and at the former house the "Marseillaise" and "Rule Britannia" were sung by the artists. At the



Bristol Hippodrome a lively spirit prevailed, and encores were demanded from each artist, one of whom contributed "Land of Hope and Glory," everybody joining in with great heartiness. At the Empire "God Save the King" was sung at the commencement of each performance, and the performers throughout found themselves on the best of terms with the audience. The cinemas also shared in the general atmosphere of joyousness, and portraits of the great men of the moment were thrown on the screen to be rapturously received.

And so the great day ended. For the vast majority it was not a hysterical day, but rather one of deep-felt joy. It was the joy of victory, and wherever one went joy was there—in the principal streets and in the quieter thoroughfares of the suburbs. Above all, there was the deep love and gratitude to the men in khaki and blue, who had looked death in the face and had met and crushed the oppressor of the world. The way had been long and dark, but deliverance had come. The day of tears gave way to the day of jubilation, a day without parallel in history. Not until the end of the week could the citizens settle down steadily to their ordinary duties.

Colston Day was marked by a joint service at the Cathedral, the presidents, committees, and members of the Anchor and Dolphin Societies heartily falling in with this novel proposal, which was made by the Bishop.

On November 20th a United Thanksgiving Service was held in the Cathedral, in which by invitation the Rev. Arnold Thomas, Pastor of Highbury Congregational Church, Bristol, took part. Subsequently a number of clergy in the Diocese sent to the Bishop a protest against Dr. Thomas's participation. The Bishop replied explaining that it was a united service for Christians, but making no apology.

Toward the close of 1918 the City Council conferred the freedom of the city on Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty, Field-Marshal Earl Haig (as they soon afterward became), and the Right Hon. David Lloyd George. Earl Beatty came to Bristol on October 23rd, 1919, to take up the freedom. He was greeted with great enthusiasm by the crowds lining the streets. In his speech in the Council Chamber Admiral Beatty said: "I am proud to be enrolled an honorary freeman of this ancient and historic city, so intimately associated with



the sea history of England. Bristol is second to none in her knowledge of the sea traditions of the past, and therefore you can well understand my pride in joining that eminent roll of distinguished sailors, and becoming a freeman of the city." After being entertained to luncheon at the Merchant Venturers' Hall, Earl Beatty proceeded to the Hippodrome and addressed the Bristol Branch of the Navy League on the vital need of sea training. A resolution, proposed by the Lord Mayor, to establish a deep-sea-going training ship was seconded by Mr. Jackson, of the Seamen and Firemen's Union (Newport), and carried with acclamation. Later a reception was held at the Council House, when Earl Beatty met many members of the Colonial Institute and Navy League.

[Earl Haig was unable to take up the freedom until April 15th, 1920, when he had a great public welcome, in which many hundreds of Mons and other ex-service men took part. In his speech acknowledging the honour done by the city the Field-Marshal spoke enthusiastically of the bravery and endurance of the men of the Gloucesters. "If," he said, "I needed more to keep me from thinking too much of my own particular achievements during these recent years, I could find it in the way that West-Countrymen, and men of this city not least among them, upheld in the great war the record of a fighting and adventurous past. Battalions of the Gloucester Regiment served with distinction in many divisions under my command in France. Bristol has her own battalions—the 4th (City of Bristol) Battalion, for example, of whose exploits all who live in this great city may well be proud. Future generations of Bristol men who wish to sound the glories and extol the reputation of their city will not need to hark back to the reign of Henry VIII. or to the days of the Armada. They need dive no deeper into history than the years of the Great War to find all the honour and all the glory of which this or any other city may well be proud." The great soldier commented on the hostility of certain trade unions toward ex-service men. These unions, he said, could afford to be generous, and they were not asked to make one-hundredth part of the sacrifice so cheerfully made in the war by the men who now sought sympathy and help. Before leaving Bristol Earl Haig was made a Doctor of Laws of the University and



a freeman of the Merchant Venturers' Society. He also paid a private visit to his old School—Clifton College.]

The General Election of December, 1918, had a close connection with the war. It is not necessary to deal with the issues then left for the country to decide. Enormously greater than before was the number of voters, principally owing to the granting of the franchise to women, and it was beyond question that this important change was hastened by the value of the war work performed by members of that sex. The Premier, Mr. Lloyd George, spoke at Colston Hall during the election campaign. The polling took place on Saturday, December 14th, and as time had to be allowed for many voters who were on military or other service abroad to send home their voting papers, the counting was deferred until December 28th, when it was found that Bristol had returned five supporters of the Coalition Government.

#### 1919.

The year following the war was marked by many grave responsibilities and anxieties. There was a relaxation of the strain and suffering inseparable from the period of the greatest international struggle the world has experienced, but many difficult problems presented themselves after the demobilisation of our men, the cessation of war industries, and the attempt to place matters once more on a peace footing. Unemployment became serious, and while Bristol firms, with few exceptions, kept their promises to take back former employees, a considerable number of ex-service men, after discharge from the Army, found themselves without work. Many of the unskilled were severely handicapped, for in important branches of industry a shortage of trained men was reported. This, coupled with the dislocation of preceding years, affected the supply of machinery and of the material needed for industrial purposes. The difficulties of the situation were increased by the scarcity and costliness of coal, high prices, industrial unrest, and rapid changes in rates of wages; many complaints were heard of lessened output, and attempts were made to bring home to all workers that it was only by increased production that increased wages could be permanently established. Congestion at the ports (Bristol included) was one of the features of the





PRESENTATION OF FREEDOM OF THE CITY TO EARL BEATTY,  
OCTOBER 23RD, 1919.



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PRESENTATION OF FREEDOM OF THE CITY TO EARL HAIG,  
APRIL 15TH, 1920.







year, a contributory cause being the enormous extra traffic thrown on the railways, all suffering from the fact that so much of their rolling stock had been sent abroad for war purposes. A great deal of the extra traffic was owing to interruption of the coasting trade by the war conditions, and it was realised that it was of the highest importance to restore this coastwise transit in order to relieve the crush on the railways.

At the beginning of 1919 two captured German submarines were towed up the Avon and moored near St. Augustine's Bridge. Many visitors inspected them. Their mechanical arrangements were extremely interesting, and in some respects different from those adopted in British under-water craft.

Toward the end of January the *Hyderabad*, one of the British "mystery ships," was brought to the City Docks for the inspection of the citizens. In general appearance, at a little distance, she resembled an ordinary tramp steamer of rather small dimensions. Her purpose was to act as a decoy to the enemy U-boats. Having tempted the foe to come within short range, the armament of the tramp was suddenly brought into play and the enemy vessel sunk by gunfire or torpedo. The Lord Mayor and a civic party went aboard this boat and welcomed the officers, and a similar greeting was extended to the representatives of the British Navy in charge of the U-boats.

The formation of a Bristol branch of the Anglo-American Society at the end of January was yet another indication of the prevailing desire for permanently closer relations with our kinsmen of the United States.

The influenza epidemic already mentioned caused the Bristol rate of mortality to rise to an exceptional height. In January, 1919, it was stated that 1,050 deaths from this malady had occurred in the city in the preceding years. The epidemic lasted for some weeks, and then gradually subsided.

During this year many war memorial schemes came up for consideration. It is impossible to deal with the various proposals in detail, and in a number of cases the outcome is not yet certain. One proposal was that Bristol Bridge (often congested by the great volume of traffic passing over it) should be widened, and so treated as to give it an appearance in keeping



with the memorial of a great victory. A winter garden in Colston Avenue was another suggested scheme. An elaborate shelter on the triangular paved area on St. Augustine's Bridge was also proposed.

Mr. T. J. Lennard was mainly instrumental in leading the City Council to acquire blocks of property fronting College Green extending from Park Street round to Deanery Road as the site on which municipal buildings could be erected in the future. The Council did not commit themselves to any war memorial, but Mr. Lennard's idea was that the new range of municipal offices should have a lofty central tower, and that this part of the design should be made the civic war memorial, its cost, estimated at £50,000, to be met by voluntary contributions. He offered £10,000 as his own donation.

Several philanthropic schemes of importance were also put forward as fit subjects for assistance from any war memorial fund. One was a great proposal for the extension of the work of the Young Men's Christian Association, and another a far-reaching scheme adopted by the Bristol Recreation Council for extending the organised means of recreation among young people and adults. Up to the end of 1919 no general civic scheme had been adopted. Parochial and school war memorials are numerous.

As a memorial of his son, Captain Bruce Wills, who was killed in the war, Mr. W. Melville Wills offered to provide Bristol with a new Homœopathic Hospital. Cotham House and grounds were secured for this purpose. The scheme involved large outlay, and structural operations had to be deferred owing to the abnormal conditions affecting the building trade.

Bristol paid cordial tribute to her heroes in an assembly of a deeply impressive character which took place in the Colston Hall on February 15th. The Lord Mayor sent a message of greeting to the King informing His Majesty of the civic reception, and the following reply was received:—

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,  
15th February, 1919.

TO THE LORD MAYOR OF BRISTOL,

I thank you, my Lord Mayor, for your dutiful message of greeting. It is with much gratification I have learned from



you that the citizens of Bristol are to do honour to-day to a number of officers, warrant officers, petty officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of your ancient city who have won distinctions in this great war.

I desire to congratulate all those whom you are honouring to-day on their magnificent achievements, and at the same time I wish to associate myself with the feelings of pride aroused in the hearts of your fellow-citizens at the splendid record of Bristol's gallant sons, who have added fresh lustre to your city's great traditions.

GEORGE R.I.

The men who were to participate in the civic reception paraded at the Drill Hall, Old Market Street, and the route to the Colston Hall was densely crowded with people who cheered the war heroes enthusiastically as they marched, headed by the band of the Gloucestershire Regiment. The hall was tastefully decorated with the flags of the Allies, and the proceedings opened with the National Anthem. About 250 officers, N.C.O.'s and men were presented with an effectively-designed address. Having concluded the presentation of these addresses, the Lord Mayor (Alderman Twiggs) said about one thousand Bristol men had won distinctions. His Lordship then presented a gold watch and an illuminated address to each of the V.C.'s, whose names and deeds were announced by Major John Carr, M.B.E.

After a scene of great enthusiasm, Colonel Burges, V.C., D.S.O., returned thanks, on behalf of the recipients, for the handsome gifts which had been made to them. An investiture followed, and subsequently General Sir Henry C. Sclater said it was a great satisfaction to him to find how much Bristol appreciated the bravery of its citizens. It was the bravery of such men which had ensured victory.

The work of completing a list of those who had won distinctions during the war subsequently showed that the number was much greater than was known at the time of the Colston Hall gathering.

By the death on March 6th of Mr. S. J. King Bristol lost one of its most kind-hearted of citizens, and one who had done much for the men on active service. The shelter



on the edge of Durdham Down (near St. John's Schools) was erected by him for the use of disabled and invalided men, of whom there were a large number in the city during the war period and after. Another of his thoughtful acts was the compilation of little books of "Travel Talk" for the use of our soldiers. French, German, and Italian vocabularies were included in these publications, and Mr. King at his own cost printed and circulated many thousands of copies. He and Mrs. King entertained many parties of wounded, one of the largest on his 70th birthday, within a few weeks of his death.

General Sir William Birdwood, who is an Old Cliftonian, paid a visit to Bristol on March 21st. Luncheon was taken at the Constitutional Club, after which General Birdwood proceeded to Clifton College. The College O.T.C. contingent were busily engaged on military engineering work when Sir William arrived, and he watched them with evident interest. The General subsequently spoke on the work of the O.T.C.

A complimentary dinner was given at the Bristol Liberal Club on March 21st to Mr. R. E. Bush. Particular interest was invested in the gathering by the attendance of General Birdwood in recognition of the great liberality of Mr. Bush in caring for wounded Australian soldiers by turning his beautiful home at Stoke Bishop (Bishop's Knoll) into a hospital, to which he and Mrs. Bush devoted constant attention. The leader of the Australian troops spoke in terms of warm praise of this great service.

On April 2nd a welcome was given to Bristol men of the R.N.V.R. on their return.

Major Carr, M.B.E., as Recruiting Officer in Bristol, won many friends, and on April 25th a presentation was made to him at the Council House.

Gallipoli Day was celebrated on April 26th, and General Sir Ian Hamilton took part in the proceedings.

On May 13th the 6th Gloucesters had their colours handed back to them by the Lord Mayor, the ceremony taking place outside the Council House.

Two impressive services were held at the Cathedral in May, one for the fallen railwaymen and the other commemorating the sacrifices made by employees of the Imperial Tobacco Company.



Lieut.-General Sir Henry Sclater paid his last official visit to Bristol as Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Command on May 20th. After being entertained by the Lord Mayor to luncheon at the Council House, the General, in College Green, invested 150 men with decorations won during the war. At the conclusion of the investiture the General said that he left the command with great regret. It had always been a pleasure to be at Bristol, where he had invariably received the kindest of welcomes and the greatest assistance from all in authority.

On June 8th Sir Barclay J. Baron died as the result of an accidental fall in his garden a few weeks previously.

The 1st Gloucesters were welcomed home on June 10th.

June 14th was observed as Territorial Day. Earl Beauchamp, Lord-Lieutenant of Bristol, gave an address at Colston Hall.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Rosslyn Wemyss (First Sea Lord) and Lady Wemyss visited Avonmouth on July 2nd, on the occasion of the opening of the Sailors' Rest provided by the British and Foreign Sailors Society.

Bristol gave a cordial welcome to the naval heroes of Jutland and Zeebrugge, who arrived on July 3rd, on a three days' visit to stimulate interest in the Victory Loan. The Lord Mayor welcomed the party at the Council House, where he entertained them to luncheon. On another day they were the guests of the Bristol Rotary Club.

On Saturday morning, July 5th, the Lord Mayor, standing on the Council House steps, read the Peace Proclamation. A great crowd assembled, and from the Council House entrance one could look over a sea of faces extending far up into Wine Street. Character and colour were imparted to the group surrounding the Lord Mayor by the scarlet robes of the Aldermen and Councillors, by the lines of police officers carrying silver maces, and by the gathering of civic officials. A fanfare from the city trumpeters having been sounded, the Lord Mayor with clear voice read the King's Proclamation, announcing Thanksgiving Day for Peace. A further fanfare of trumpets was followed by the singing of a verse of the National Anthem, and three cheers for the Lord Mayor brought the proceedings to a close.

Thanksgiving Sunday, July 6th, was universally observed in Bristol, and the special services held at the Cathedral were



largely attended. At matins the ceremony of the laying-up of the colours of the 2nd Southern General Hospital took place. Detachments of the R.A.M.C. and nursing staff, and about 300 troops were present, the preacher being the Archdeacon of Swindon (Dr. Talbot). The afternoon united service at the Cathedral was of a civic and official character, the immense congregation including the Lord Mayor, Sheriff, members of the Corporation and representatives of various public bodies. An inspiring address was given by the Bishop of Bristol. At the evening nave service the preacher was the Dean of Bristol. A united service, arranged by the Religious Observance Society, was held at College Green in the evening, the speakers being the Lord Mayor, the Dean of Bristol (Dr. Wynne Willson), the Ven. Archdeacon of Swindon, the Rev. F. G. Benskin (Baptist), and the Rev. A. W. Harrison (Wesleyan). A similar meeting was organised by the local Y.M.C.A. branch at Bedminster Hippodrome. At the Pro-Cathedral there was a solemn High Mass, at which the Bishop of Clifton preached.

A great sensation in commercial and other circles was caused by the sudden announcement on July 9th that the price of coal was to be increased 6s. per ton. Fuel supply, its prices, and the Government control of the industry, and the demand of the miners for nationalisation of the mines continued throughout the year to be matters of controversy.

The City Council, on July 18th, adopted an address to the King in these terms :—

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

May it please Your Majesty,

We, Your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the City of Bristol, beg most humbly to offer to Your Majesty our heartfelt congratulations on the attainment of the Peace wherewith the long struggle of the past five years has been crowned.

With a deep sense of thankfulness we realise that through the heroism and self-sacrificing spirit of all branches of Your Majesty's Forces and of the Allied countries victory has been gained for the cause of humanity, and we hope that through the establishment of the League of Nations warfare will cease, and an enduring peace will be secured for all mankind.



We are all happy in the knowledge that the war which has now come to an end has been the means of welding more closely together all parts of Your Majesty's world-wide Empire; and we trust that, now the blessings of peace have again been vouchsafed to them, Your Majesty's faithful subjects will go steadily forward in a true endeavour to build up and strengthen Your Majesty's dominions throughout the world, and that a lasting feeling of fellowship and brotherhood will spring up and flourish amongst all the races within their bounds, and that Your Majesty may long live to reign over a happy, prosperous, and contented people.

July 19th was the day appointed for national peace rejoicings, and while in Bristol the general celebration was carried through on that date, treats to school children were deferred until the 24th. To draw up a local programme the Lord Mayor called together a number of citizens and these were formed into a general committee. Sub-Committees were entrusted with specific branches of the work. At first a difficulty was anticipated in finding a suitable part in the day's proceedings for the demobilised men in consequence of the large number. It was estimated that there were about 30,000 in the city. Afterwards, however, these returned soldiers were given a prominent place in the programme, a procession being formed from Queen Square to Durdham Down, in which they formed numerically the strongest body. The procession was headed by mounted police, and included in it were the Crimea and Indian Mutiny Veterans (riding in motor-cars), wounded and disabled men (also in vehicles), a long line of W.R.A.F.'s, and of the R.N.V.R., the R.A.F., the West Yorkshire Regiment, the Yorkshire and Lancashire Regiment, and the Motor Machine Corps. A small body of Australian mounted soldiers also appeared. Several bands took part, including that of the 1st Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment. Large crowds watched the progress of the procession through the city. At the Victoria Rooms a stand had been erected, and here the Lord Mayor (with whom was the Sheriff, Mr. Ivie M. Dunlop) took the salute. On Durdham Down speeches were delivered by the Lord Mayor, the Bishop, and the Rev. F. G. Benskin. Sports followed, and refreshments were supplied to



the ex-soldiers. The veterans and the wounded men broke off from the procession and were entertained at the Zoological Gardens. In the various wards of the city, in decorated halls and schoolrooms, large parties of old people (aged 70 and over) were provided with tea, and many helpers joined in the work of waiting on their guests and in afterwards entertaining them. Each guest received as a souvenir a specially designed card. In several parts of the city bands were engaged to play in the parks. The proceedings were marred by rain, and at night an incessant downpour greatly affected the number of those who watched the lighting of the beacons at appointed centres. On several other occasions it had been the practice to build huge bonfires on heights in various parts of the country, so that when ignited at the time appointed in the national scheme these beacons would be visible in every part of the land. On this occasion, to obviate consumption of valuable fuel, naval flares were used. They burned a long time and gave a brilliant illumination. In Bristol they were lit on the Observatory Hill, on Horfield Common, at Stoke Park, Kingswood, Avon View, St. George, and on Bedminster Down. July 24th was the day for the children's treats, and each child received suitable refreshments and a souvenir card.

In September units of the Fleet paid a round of visits to various seaports. H.M.S. *Castor* and four destroyers came to Avonmouth, where the vessels were inspected by many citizens. The presence of these warships gave rise to a round of social engagements between the 18th and 22nd. A large body of the sailors marched through the centre of the city, and were received at the Council House by the Lord Mayor. The programme included a dinner to the officers, who were the guests of the Liberal and Constitutional Clubs, dinners at Avonmouth to the crews, and a fête at the Zoological Gardens.

Responsible as is the work of a police force in peace time, its importance and scope were increased enormously on the outbreak of hostilities. The Bristol Force were quickly depleted by the calling up of 64 reservists, and the subsequent volunteering of a further 202 members. In order to cope with the extra work and the depletion of the numbers, 66 police pensioners were called back to duty, 8 women were employed as clerks in the head office, and 13 were appointed as policewomen.

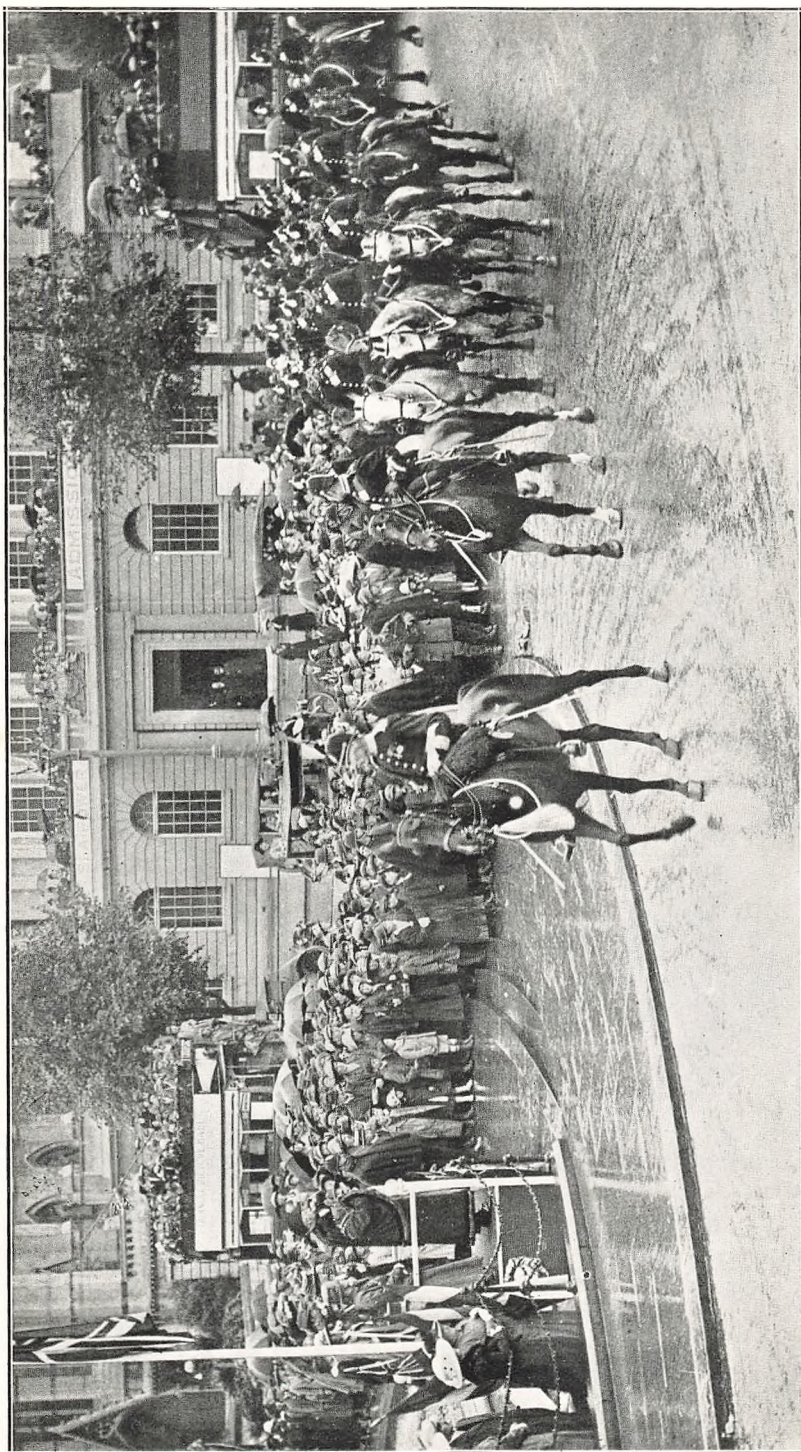


In April, 1915, an appeal was made by the Chief Constable for special constables, and a large number of gentlemen met him in response to his invitation at the Central Station, with the result that 217 were sworn in by the Lord Mayor on May 6th, 1915. A total of 1,042 special constables was afterwards reached. These "specials" performed four hours' police duty per day every alternate week, and their public-spirited action in serving the city at the sacrifice of their leisure and personal interests was greatly appreciated by the Government and our own city authorities. When the time arrived at which their services could be dispensed with, 236 were enrolled as a Special Reserve Force at the request of the Home Secretary. Besides their ordinary duties, the Police Force had the responsibility for carrying out of a multitude of emergency orders and other special tasks imposed upon them, including those relating to Air Raids and Lighting, many orders concerning food control (prior to February, 1918), petrol restriction, agricultural horses and sales of horses, coal distribution, cocaine, the keeping of pigeons, firearms and ammunition, road transport horses, restriction of aliens, various censuses of animals, etc. In addition, several men were lent to the military authorities and the Ministry of Munitions for special purposes. Innumerable inquiries from Government Departments had also to be dealt with by the police. The Fire Brigades in the neighbouring counties were co-ordinated with the Bristol Police Fire Brigade for the purpose of dealing with serious outbreaks of fire, and the Chief Constable of Bristol was appointed Mobilising Officer. Among those of Bristol's police who joined the Forces (the majority were for Bristol's Heavy Battery) the casualties were unfortunately heavy. The number killed was thirty-eight, four died from wounds or exposure, and sixty-eight others were wounded. Nine members were granted commissions, one was awarded the Military Cross, seven won the Distinguished Conduct Medal, seven the Military Medal, two the Meritorious Service Medal, one the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, six the Croix de Guerre, and two were mentioned in Despatches; and other distinctions were gained. On October 12th, 1919, 660 officers and men of the Bristol Constabulary attended the Police Memorial Service at the Cathedral, at which the Lord Mayor, the Sheriff, and



members of the Watch Committee were present, and the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Bristol. The Chief Constable (Mr. J. H. Watson) has been awarded the O.B.E. and Chief Superintendent Bruce the King's Police Medal for their services, and Special Constable Joseph Trask the O.B.E. for meritorious services at a fire in Old Market Street on the 2nd August, 1917. National medals and local certificates have been awarded to special constables.





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PEACE DAY CELEBRATION, JULY 19TH, 1919: BRISTOL POLICE PASSING THE SALUTING POINT.







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